

THE SEMIAHMOO DENTAL OUTREACH TEAM

The Semiahmoo Dental Outreach Team was formed in 2009 and has now carried out outreach clinics in both Vietnam (2009) and the Philippines (2010). It will be returning to both countries to carry on its dental outreach work: in the Philippines in 2011, and in Vietnam in 2012.

The Philippine Outreach Clinics

In November 2010, the Semiahmoo Dental Outreach team travelled to the Philippine Island of Siquijor. Our group of 19 included two hygienists, three dental assistants, two fourth year Kwantlen College nursing students and their instructor, several support volunteers, and five dentists from the South Surrey area: Ken Stones, Les Ennis, Murray Bohn, Grant Rawston, and Bob Symonds. The team is led by Ken Stones who has been involved in dental outreach projects since 1994. Our goals were to treat the children and teachers of two elementary schools in the village of San Juan, and to teach decay preventive measures to as many residents as possible. Team members pay for all their personal expenses—travel, accommodation, and meals. All donations go to the Siquijor School System for educational supplies and materials.

Siquijor is an island of 70,000 people, with a very low average income level. There is a very high caries rate due to huge sugar consumption and poor knowledge of the sugar-caries (cavities) cause-effect. There are three government employed dentists on the island who do relief of pain by extracting teeth. We observed very little restorative work and what we saw was of a very poor quality, resulting in treatment-related damage in each patient we saw.

We set up our clinic in a large dormitory in Salongon Elementary School. We were able to arrive with 14 cases of equipment and materials supplied by the Dental Mission Project (in partnership with Patterson Dental and UBC). We had three portable dental units, two stations for extractions and triage, and a hygiene station with a cavitron. Over eight days, we saw 743 patients, restored 1,215 tooth surfaces, and did over 420 extractions. We also applied fluoride varnish to every patient.

We owe the clinic's extreme success to many participants, especially the team members whose dedication and enthusiasm made it happen. They worked extremely hard and uncomplainingly under difficult circumstances and initial technical problems. The success of the trip was bolstered by the generous support of the International College of Dentists (ICD) and two lower mainland Rotary Clubs, whose donations were used to purchase supplies and equipment. We also received donations from the public in South Surrey which we passed on to the Siquijor school district for projects identified by the Siquijor Rotary Club. The support of the Siquijor Rotary Club made a tremendous difference in enabling us to concentrate on the clinical work. They had everything in place for our arrival, provided about 20 volunteers each day, transported children to and from the clinic, and took care of any needs as they arose.

The nursing students who undertook the prevention program were also critical to the success of our visit. They had spent two weeks in their program researching and developing a power point presentation on caries prevention. This was customized to show Filipino snack foods and

photographs from our triage station of badly broken down mouths. The nursing students presented their program at several elementary schools, seven high schools and five PTA meetings with up to 400 parents in attendance. These students added an extremely valuable resource to our team, and we will be expanding their number to four when we return to Siquijor in November 2011. We are also bringing a Rotary-based construction team who plan to install a water filtration and fluoridation system for the Island's residents. The team is anticipating a positive follow up to its 2010 effort.

NEXT OUTREACH CLINIC: Siquijor Island, Philippines, November 2011

Donations are gratefully accepted. These will go to the Siquijor School Board for educational support for the children. In 2010 we were able to purchase several printers, which are now shared by several schools, and supplies for a school for the handicapped children of the Island. Donations of \$3,000 paid for this educational support.

Donations can be made through the University of British Columbia at the Dental Mission Project website: www.thedentalmissionproject.com. Donations should be designated for the "Philippine Mission." UBC will issue a tax receipt for the full donation amount.

Any questions can be directed to either Ken Stones (604-535-8500) or Rick Stones (604-850-5684).

