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India Mission Trip Report 2019

In January 2019, for the sixth year, a surgical team from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) travelled to Ahmedabad, India to provide free surgical treatment to children with complex spine and upper / lower extremity deformities. The trip was coordinated and organized by physicians from the Pediatric Orthopaedic Department at CCHMC in conjunction with Health and Care Foundation (previously known as Polio Foundation) and GCS Hospital. The team was headed by Shital N Parikh, MD and included orthopaedic surgeons Peter Sturm, MD, Viral J Jain, MD, Wendy Ramalingam, MD, Micah Sinclair, MD, Dominique Laron, MD, Andrea Chan, MD, and anesthesiologist Nicole Horn, MD, and Alex Serafin, MD, neuro-monitoring personnel Tiffany Frye and Megan Kloc and Medtronic representative Kevin Amongero. The surgical instruments and implants were donated by Medtronic, USA. The neuro-monitoring equipment and supplies were donated by Evokes Inc – a Cincinnati-based company. Bone graft products were donated by Allosource, a nonprofit bone allograft processing organization in USA.

Between Jan 7-Jan 12, six children with complex spine deformities (scoliosis / kyphosis) and 35 children with upper and lower extremity deformities were operated upon. Each spine surgery lasted an average of 6 to 8 hours. A visit to 'Apang Manav Mandal' – a house for disabled children, helped to identify children who could potentially benefit from surgery. The upper and lower extremity procedures included patients with birth deformities, cerebral palsy, post-traumatic deformities and arthrogryposis. The local orthopaedic surgeons and anesthesiologists assisted CCHMC physicians during these procedures, thus providing an opportunity for each team to participate in complex medical decision-making process. The orthopaedic residents scrubbed on each case and were involved in academic discussions related to patient care.

The CCHMC team was provided great hospitality by Health and Care Foundation and GCS Hospital. All team members were immensely proud and satisfied to be part of this mission trip. On Jan 10, 2019, the CCHMC team members were facilitated by the Ahmedabad Orthopaedic Association during an evening CME event that included presentation by all faculty members. Besides surgeries, the CCHMC team members could get the taste of traditional Indian culture during their visit to local sight-seeing places, including the 'Heritage walk' and 'Mahatma Gandhi Ashram'. Typically, the evenings involved varied Indian cuisine and local shopping. A 2-day trip to the 'Golden city' Jaisalmer in Rajasthan gave the opportunity to enjoy the palaces and a night under the stars in the heart of Thar Desert.

The trip prompted significant educational and cultural exchanges and was viewed as a great success and achievement by both sides. We plan to continue building up on this relationship by similar annual mission trips focusing on the areas of identified pediatric orthopaedic need in India.

I, on behalf of the entire team, would like to thank Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Health and Care Foundation and GCS Hospital, Ahmedabad, India to allow us to be part of this wonderful trip and to be able to make a difference in the life of our patients. I would also like to thank Medtronic, Allosource and Evokes Inc for their generous contribution.



Shital N Parikh, MD