



2022
Katani,
Kenya

TRIP REPORT

OUR STORY

Katani General Hospital – Katani, Kenya – October 16 – 21, 2022

Operation Medical is delighted to continue missions again with our first outreach since January 2020 and the Pandemic “Pause”. The mission took place from October 16–21 at Katani General Hospital in Katani, Machakos County, Kenya. During the week, we conducted a surgical camp as well as development of a breast cancer screening treatment program.

THE PLACE:

Katani Hospital is a private multi-specialty community hospital located in Katani suburbs of Nairobi, Kenya approximately 25 kilometers from the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport of Nairobi on Katani Road off of Mombasa Highway. The area was formerly a sisal plantation farm until real estate took over in the past decade. The hospital offers a 24-hour full-service pharmacy, laboratory, labor and delivery service, emergency services and medical admissions. The Hospital opened in October

2018 and was founded by Modesta Vesonder and Terrance L. Baker, who are the founders of a non-profit charity called Sollay Kenyan Foundation.

This small hospital has one fully equipped operating room and one partially equipped operating room. We were able to provide supplies and equipment to run both operation rooms simultaneously during the camp for Gynecology & Obstetrics and Plastic Surgery.



THE STORY:

The 2022 Katani mission team was comprised of thirteen experienced volunteers transporting thirteen bags of medical supplies with a combined weight of about 350 pounds. The volunteers originated from New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Each traveled from the US to Doha and then Doha to Nairobi for about 18 hours of air time. All volunteers arrived about 2:30am local time after processing through immigration and baggage claim.

We transferred to our hotel after going through immigration and baggage claim. The hotel is at the border of Nairobi and Machakos counties and convenient to the Nairobi Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

On Sunday, October 16th two vans picked up the team at 11:00am and transported us through Syokimau and Katani areas on crowded highways and streets lined with small businesses. Our expert drivers, Nathan and Francis, had to navigate numerous cows, goats, geese, sheep and one donkey wandering the roads. This area is booming- lots of home construction! We were greeted with Isukuti traditional music and Maasai Women Dancers. Many speakers talked about the hospital and the need for medical care. Our work began then with getting the lay of the land, setting up the supplies we brought as well as supplies pre-ordered locally and waiting for us in 10 boxes. We commenced preparing the work areas and screening of patients. Each morning of the camp, our drivers picked us up promptly at 7:15am for the 45-minute commute to the bumpy, dirt road leading to Katani Hospital.

The facility has no elevators, but rather ramps from the ground floor up to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor where the operating and recovery rooms are located.

During our mission we served not only the patient population, but the staff. The hospital is committed to learn and improve. It was gratifying to be able to educate local staff on various competencies such as improving the local practices of sterile technique and passing instruments as well as having some local residents scrub in.

In addition to surgical services, the camp provided initial training for a breast cancer screening and treatment clinic.



Margaret Marchaterre

Thank you, Midge, for capturing the beautiful images of this mission!



REFLECTIONS:

Dr. Daniel R. Farber

Staff Anesthesiologist, Aurora Sheboygan Medical Center, Kohler, Wisconsin
Retired United States Airforce, Special Operations Surgical Team

I consider myself very fortunate to have crossed paths with a group like Op Med and the great people that are a part of it. Several years ago, one of my fellow Anesthesiologists introduced me to the group on a trip to India, and had a great time taking care of patients that truly needed it and getting to know an awesome group of colleagues.

My background has been unique, and to me a perfect fit for taking part in surgical missions across the globe. When I first started in medicine, I enjoyed the challenge of dealing with sick patients and being hands-on and resourceful in my skill set to help them. I think this, more than anything drew me to Anesthesia and Active Duty Military Service helped me take care of school debt and have a broad and unique experience. Over my time in the military, my skills were challenged to the extreme taking care of war-injured trauma patients that needed urgent surgery in austere environments.



Although I separated from the military, mostly to take care of my growing family, I still wanted to pursue the niche I had come to understand well. OpMed has been this opportunity to take less than ideal healthcare for patients across the globe, and bring a more advanced standard-of-care in medicine to them. I thank God for the resources and abilities to allow me to help our fellow humans get the healthcare they need and deserve, very much due to the hardworking people at OpMed.

Note: This is Dan's 2nd mission trip with Operation Medical, his first was in 2018 to Panna, India which included his honeymoon! We were thrilled to have him back and hope next time his wife Ann, who is a nurse, will be able to join us again as well.

**Laura Mae Amsbaugh, BS RN**

Adult Intensive Care Unit

Penn State Health, Holy Spirit Medical Center, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

I am fortunate to have been volunteering at Operation Medical's warehouse for several years. Now, I feel humbled to experience my first surgical camp at Katani Hospital. I am a new ICU nurse, but I am not new to healthcare. I observed the health care system crack under the strain of the COVID 19 pandemic and witnessed burn out of healthcare professionals after working in less-than-ideal conditions. We often take for granted the technology that we have access to in the United States as we get frustrated with malfunctioning equipment, lag time in communication, lack of patient transportation staff, late med delivery, and so much more! All of these frustrations seem trivial now that I have experienced working in an underprivileged country.

I am grateful to have the necessary equipment and peer support to care for my patients at home. I am blown away by all the compassion and hard work that has been shown during this surgical camp. Our team faced the challenges of equipment deficiencies and malfunctions, a shortage of support staff and early developed infrastructure. The Op Med team took it all in stride and with a few deep breaths got busy making it all work! We worked as though we had been together for years providing the best patient care possible!

I am humbled by my experience – it breaks my heart knowing there are so many people that need our help. The lack of affordable or available health care here means that many people are living their entire lives with deformities and other health care issues that could be addressed. I do however, feel joy helping those we can, especially when I see the grateful smiles and words of thanks from the patients. This mission trip and the patients will stay in my heart forever! I look forward to many more trips with Operation Medical.

Note: this is Laura's first mission trip with Operation Medical, however she has been a regular volunteer at our warehouse for several years.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: DANIEL KIPROP

Lynn and Agnes Kiprop were married for 20 years and had two children. Two years ago, their third child, Daniel was born and Agnes passed away during the delivery. They live in Kiricho County and are members of the Kipsigis Tribe. This is rural area known for tea plantations and is in the Rift Valley, approximately 5 hours by car from Nairobi.

Lynn, an employee of Kiricho County was left to care for his three children. Daniel was never breast fed and this is perhaps why his tied tongue was not diagnosed for over a year and a half. His father noticed that the baby was salivating extensively and the local hospital was unable to diagnosis the issue. As the child was learning to speak, it was noticed that he was not able to speak correctly.

Daniel's cousins brought him to Katani Hospital to be examined at one of the pre-screening sessions for the upcoming Operation Medical 2022 surgical camp. Dr. Kenneth Arthur assessed the child on Sunday and Daniel was the first patient of the camp on Monday morning. Dr. Arthur shared with Lynn that the release of the tongue (Frenulectomy) was successful and explained that he will need therapy to learn to use his tongue for speech and eating and that he should do very well. Mr. Kiprop was very grateful for this surgery for his son, which will surely change his life in many ways.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: MERCY WANJIRU

Mercy Wanjiru is a 23-year-old who learned of the Operation Medical camp from a friend who saw an advertisement and sent her a message on WhatsApp. She is a member of the Kikuyu Tribe and grew up in Kajiodo County which is about four hours from Katani Hospital. She said that she traveled to the hospital by taking two buses and one bike ride. Mercy's mother and grandmother have supported the family and three cousins by sewing chefs' hats.

She came to the OpMed camp seeking help and a breast reduction surgery. Her lifestyle and activities have been hampered due to her large breasts and she also has suffered from back pain. She has not been able to dress properly or maintain an active lifestyle due to her large breasts. Dr. Kenneth Arthur felt the surgery was appropriate and performed a bilateral breast reduction surgery on Monday, October 18th.



Mercy was thrilled at her post op visit on Tuesday morning, smiling from ear to ear sharing that this surgery will change her life! She has received a four-year scholarship at Kenya Strathmore University in Actuarial Science and is excited to pursue her education and participating in more athletics.



Breast Cancer Center and Treatment Center

Months before Operation Medical's arrival in Kenya, Dr. Scott Barnes put together a handbook detailing a specific state of the art approach to treat breast cancer. The research for the handbook was centered around recent scientific studies concerning the women of Kenya.

Members of the community were present for the kickoff, an important step in establishment of a breast cancer clinic, especially in areas of the world where women are often shunned for various health problems.

Dr. Barnes provided education to the new Breast Center Coordinator, Leonida Kivaye, as well as the hospital administrator, Protas Makani. Hospital leadership is committed to breast cancer care for their community and plan to build a new four-room clinic area for this initiative.

Phase one of the Operation Medical supported clinic is the Breast Cancer Clinic and Treatment Center and Dr. Barnes shared that the clinic should be able to support approximately 70 percent of community's breast cancer population. He will continue to work with Katani Hospital and hopes to progress to Phase Two and later Phase Three which will expand the treatment options for the women in the area.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: ZEDRINE CHEPTUMBA

Zatrine Cheptumba is a single, 24-year-old woman from a farming community and the Kelijen Tribe of Kapsabet County. She lives with her mother, Reni, and seven siblings. Zatrine heard about the Operation Medical Camp through friends about five days prior to the camp. She had been experiencing abdominal and pelvic pain for about two years and did not seek medical advice until now. Upon examination by Dr. Parul Krishnamurthy, she was diagnosed with multiple myomas (uterine fibroids) and found to have a uterus enlarged to the size of an 18-week pregnancy. While these fibroids are not associated with an increased risk of uterine cancer, they may likely have grown or multiplied and left her unable to bear children.

Dr. Krishnamurthy was able to remove the myomas and Zatrine should recover fully to an active, pain free-life. She was very grateful for the care she received and will make the seven-hour journey home in a few days once she identifies someone to drive her.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: NICOLE WAIRIMU

Nicole Wairimu is 19 years old and was born with a cleft palate and lip. She has had multiple surgeries in her young life, the first at the age of 1 for her mouth and at age 12 to correct a malformation of her eye. She is the oldest of four children to her mother, Grace, and father, Charles, living in Ngong and are from the Kikuyu Tribe.

The family heard about the surgical camp from a friend and made a three-hour trip (one car, two buses and two motorbike rides) to Katani Hospital. She was examined by Dr. Kenneth Arthur for a revision of her upper lip and he felt that he could make improvement and performed the surgery on October 19th.



The day after her surgery, Nicole's mother wrote to us saying "We, Nicole's family take this opportunity to thank the Katani Hospital Management and Operation Medical for making this happen. We are grateful."

The Operation Medical team wishes Nicole much success in her desire to become a nurse, as in her words, "She can help other people like herself."



CASES BY GENDER:

Female – 30

Male - 11

CASES BY AGE:

Youngest – 2-years old

Oldest – 65-years-old

CASES BY TYPE:

Breast Reduction

Excision of Cyst /
Lesion / Mass /
Scar

Frenulectomy

Hysterectomy

Labiaplasty

Myomectomy

Perineorrhaphy

Release Burn Contracture

Release Scar Contracture

Repair / Revision Scar

Repair Cleft Lip

Salpingectomy

Skin Grafts and Repair

**The Team****Team Leader**

Kenneth Arthur, MD

Team Coordinator

Cheryl Arthur, PMP

Surgeons

Kenneth Arthur, MD

Parul Krishnamurthy, MD

Breast Cancer Program**Advisor**

Scott Barnes, DO

Anesthesia

Dan Farber, MD

Suzanne Miller, CRNA

Scott Slocum, CRNA

Surgical Technologists

Karmae Amsbaugh

Kimberly Snyder

Nurses

Laura Mae Amsbaugh, RN

Bonnie Pepper, RN

Support

Cheryl Arthur, PMP

Krishna Iyer

Margaret Marchaterre

**Team Leader Impressions**

Kenneth Arthur, MD

Plastic Surgeon, Penn Medicine, Lancaster General Health, Lancaster, PA

I feel very fortunate to be working with our team here in Katani. We are used to dealing with “less” during our mission trips, whether it be medications, instruments or technology, but the makeup of our small group is a “less is more” situation due to the experience of the team members. We have worked well together during the week and have enjoyed the opportunity to take care of the people of Kenya.

Trip Coordinator Impressions

Cheryl Arthur, PMP

The saying, “It takes a village” comes to mind when I reflect upon the past seven months of planning and coordination. All things work for the good and I am honored to have functioned in the role of trip coordinator. I would like to personally extend my gratitude to the Warehouse Committee members who played such a vital role in making sure that the team had everything we needed for patient care.

Special Thanks to Harish and Timir Patel and the Mukul and Neelima Parikh Foundation for providing room and breakfast for our volunteers in Nairobi. We also would like to acknowledge Harish Patel for graciously sponsoring a team dinner on Thursday, October 20th.

Operation Medical is thankful for all of the participants and welcomes them to join us for another camp. Please check our website at www.operationmedical.com to see how you can get involved in providing global healthcare.