



2023 Khambhat, India

TRIP REPORT

OUR STORY

Cambay General Hospital – Khambhat, India – January 28 – February 3, 2023

We were pleased to return to Cambay General Hospital in Khambhat, India for our second post-COVID mission within the past four months. Three years after our last mission to Khambhat – and one life-changing pandemic later – Operation Medical arrived with a host of faces, new and old. Amongst the 29 members of our group, we had nine new members and volunteers from seven different states. This outstanding team of professional volunteers performed 144 surgical procedures and 32 dental procedures on behalf of very grateful patients.

THE PLACE:

Khambhat is a city bursting with layers of sight and sound. Horns blare over the sound of street corner music, huddled conversations, and animals. Buildings crowd the street, filled with bright Gujarati advertisements and roll-up metal storefronts. Motorcycles, cars, bicycles, animals, and pedestrians weave within centimeters of each other riding a fine line between transit and catastrophe. Overhead, kites whip and glide across the grey skies as young children dart across rooftops, laughing and leaning precariously over balconies.

This is Khambhat. The city lies on the west coast of India in the state of Gujarat a few miles north of Mumbai. Just shy of 100,000 residents, Khambhat has a storied past. A

major port city in the 14th and 15th centuries, Khambhat was visited by African and European explorers and mentioned in the accounts of Marco Polo in 1293. At that time, Khambhat was an important trade center in cotton, silks, and spices. Over time, the port of the city silted up and, as trade slowed, the city lost much of its economic significance and financial well being.

Today, the economic status in Khambhat and the surrounding region varies widely. Cambay General Hospital is the essential provider of healthcare for those in need. It is a trusted community resource under impressive leadership, with a dedicated and caring staff - a proven partner for Operation Medical.



THE STORY:

For most of us, the journey to Khambhat meant at least 26 hours of travel, spread over multiple flights and bumpy car rides. Upon arrival at our quarters in the Vardayini Guest House, the team rested briefly before heading over to Cambay General Hospital and meeting our hosts. After a pleasant welcoming ceremony, the medical team got to work organizing supplies and creating (perhaps by magic) a functional store-room in a few short hours. It is no small feat to unpack over 20 bags containing 860 pounds of supplies! After a delicious early dinner, we returned to the guest house to sleep and prepare for the start of a busy surgical week."

Highlights from this very successful surgical mission are presented on the following pages. They include a list of cases by type, patient gender and age, selected patient spotlights, a roster of Op Med team members, and impressions and reflections from several of those team members.

First, however, our team pictured below wants to provide Special Recognition to our Hosts Dr. Dinish Pandit and Dr. Jatin Patel. The mission week's smooth operation and ultimate success was to a great extent the result of their advance screening camps to identify, inform and schedule patients for their surgeries, as well as effectively coordinating all hospital logistics.



SUPPORT STAFF

While clinical volunteers get much of the spotlight, it is important to note that our mission's success is a result of many non-clinical volunteers as well. Behind the scenes of the OR and PACU are some very diligent, busy individuals...keeping track of patient data for Op Med Records, taking photos so that we can share our works with social media through trip reports and annual reports.

The non-clinical staff also oversees logistical matters, keeping the inventory of supplies straight and ready for deployment to the surgical teams.

Thank you to all of our support volunteers that play a vital role in mission success.

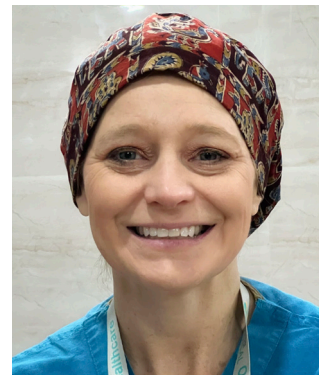
REFLECTIONS:

Jennifer Causey, CRNA, MSN*Chief CRNA, Bon Secours St Francis Hospital/DPI Anesthesia
Charleston, South Carolina*

I am so honored to have been a part of the surgical camp team at Cambay Hospital in Khambhat, India with Operation Medical (Op Med). I have always had a heart for the mission field and have had the privilege of going on previous mission trips with my church. Traveling across the world is not new to me; it is exhausting both mentally and physically, traveling 24+ hours to arrive at the guest house, drop your bags and go straight to the hospital to set up for the week...but it is worth it.

After becoming a CRNA in 2005, I knew that I wanted to be able to use the career I was “blessed with” to “bless” others. This week was about going and putting those skills to use and to provide care for those who would otherwise not receive needed surgeries. There were none of the bells and whistles we have back home, so you often have to think outside the box on how to provide a safe anesthetic. We had to use anesthesia equipment that we only read about during our training. It’s amazing how quickly you become a team with both the local OR staff and the Op Med volunteers.

It was such a blessing to me to be a part of this team and to help as many people as we could in the short time we were in Khambhat. There are no words to describe the true thankfulness you see in people’s eyes. You don’t have to speak the language to know. Nothing fills your heart more than knowing that what is just day to day for us is life changing for them. I look forward to the day I can do another surgical mission trip. Thank you, Op Med, for allowing me to be a part of this team.

**Diane McMichael, RN***Office Nurse, Arthritis and Rheumatology Specialists
Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health
Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

This is my first mission with Operation Medical. I have been an Operating Room (OR) nurse for 33 years and felt I needed a change, so I currently work in a physician’s office. I miss working in the OR and am excited to being part of this mission. I participated in a mission seven years ago to Dominican Republic for eye surgery. It was a grueling week of long days and many challenges.

Under-developed counties experience a host of other obstacles we are not used to in the U.S. I feel we take so much for granted in the U.S. – readily available supplies, stocked rooms, clean sheets, paper towels and more. My heart aches for the talented local medical staff in Khambhat, who are very committed to caring for their community.

My transition to working in the hospital here was initially a difficult transition – feeling unprepared for how the hospital works, such as walking into an OR and seeing the patient on the bed and not already aware of what procedure is scheduled for them. Panic may be a good word to describe it. However, we all negotiated the challenges each day returned the next, feeling more at ease and ready for the unexpected. The Op Med team quickly bonded together with each other and with the local staff. We overcame language barriers and persevered some long, hot, and exhausting days. At the end of the day, the people we helped have shown such appreciation, I realize it is all worth it.

I have enjoyed making new friends and working alongside some really talented and skilled professionals. It truly has been a journey worth taking and I will continue to have mission service as part of my professional and personal life goals.

**Dr Thomas Zouki***Interventional Pain Management and Anesthesiologist, Wentworth-Douglass Hospital
Dover, New Hampshire*

This medical mission in Khambhat, Gujarat, India with Operation Medical represents the first time I have ever participated in such an endeavor. I am extremely happy and satisfied with my experience.

Prior to the mission, I expected to have a feeling of reward and altruism, feelings that I have definitely experienced. What I did not anticipate was how grateful the patients, their families, and the community of Khambhat would be for our time, efforts and skills we have donated for this mission. Every day, multiple people approach us to sincerely thank us, smiling and asking to take pictures with us. This brings a very gratifying sentiment to me.

Another pleasant surprise was the connection I have made with the rest of the team. I only knew two members of the team prior to joining them for this mission. I realized that when a team joins to selflessly work towards the same humanitarian goal, it creates a gentle and easy atmosphere. I have made some really good connections with great people. I will come back on a subsequent mission.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: SHANTABAN VALMIK

Shantaban Valmik is a 37-year-old woman and dairy worker who lives with her husband's family in Gujarat. Shantaban is one of six children and comes from a traditional Indian family. At 18, her marriage was arranged and she has lived with her husband and his family since the wedding. The family works four acres of farmland where they tend buffalo and cultivate tomatoes and cucumbers. Each day Shantaban is responsible for milking the nine buffalo in the herd.



Shantaban learned about the surgical camp from her sister who lives in Khambhat, and sought care for complications of uterine prolapse. Her medical condition had impacted her ability to work and Shantaban was anxious to learn how soon she would recover from the operation. Her

sister, husband, and mother-in-law accompanied her to the hospital.

On Sunday morning, Dr. Jeffrey Segil consulted with the patient and performed a vaginal hysterectomy. Dr. Segil shared that Shantaban's surgery went well and she should be able to begin work again soon.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: NISHA MALEH



Nisha Maleh was not expecting to have a baby on January 29th, yet before the end of the day she was holding a healthy baby boy in her arms. When Nisha experienced obstructed labor Sunday afternoon, her family drove her to Cambay General Hospital (CGH) where it was determined that she would have a C-section. The local physician asked Op Med's Dr. Jeffrey Segil to assist.

Maleh is 28 years old, Muslim, and lives with her husband's family a few miles from CGH – Maleh lives with seven (now eight!) relatives. She has been married for two years and, after an early miscarriage, was happy to deliver safely. In accordance with local Gujarati customs, the boy will be named by the father's sister, six days after his birth. Another Gujarati custom dictates that Maleh will spend the first five weeks post-birth with her parents, eating a well deserved diet of sweets and buttery foods.

In the hospital, Op Med team members are often acutely aware of differences between Indian and American medical practice and we are mindful of respecting local practices. In the U.S., standard birth practice guides health-care workers to place the baby in contact with the mother's skin as soon as possible and prioritizing breast feeding when appropriate. In Maleh's case, she did not see her baby until four hours after birth and the baby was fed formula. Our missions provide opportunities for sharing thoughts on best practices in a collegial, respectful manner.

PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: SAHIL VALMIK

Sahil Valmik arrived at CGH hospital by motorcycle early Monday morning. He made the 5-mile trip with his parents who work locally buying and selling cattle feed. Sahil was born with a congenital lip deformity and although his speech was unaffected, he experienced issues with eating. More than the physical challenges, Sahil was most troubled by bullying and teasing he experienced due to his difference.

Sahil was anxious leaving his parents as he entered the operating room, but he was warmly guided to the table by staff and Op Med members. At under 40 pounds, seven-year-old Sahil was quickly anesthetized by CRNA Jessica Clough and Dr. Ken Arthur was able to begin reconstruction on his lip. The surgery was successful. Dr. Arthur was able to reconstruct the lip and the family was appreciative of the changes this will bring to Sahil's life.



PATIENT SPOTLIGHT: KARAN CHAUHAN



Karan Chauhan and his family made the 30-minute drive on Monday morning to CGH on tuk-tuk (a motorized version of the traditional pulled rickshaw or cycle). Karan is one of two boys and his parents, both 32 years old and farmers, have been married for 13 years. The family is Hindu and lives with six relatives in the nearby town of Khadodhi.

Karan is a 12-year-old boy who was born with a vestigial, extra thumb on his right hand – a condition known as polydactyly. His parents had attempted to remove Karan's accessory digit by tying off the thumb (ligation), but the process was not successful and left the child in pain. Dr. Ken Arthur, working alongside CRNA Jessica Clough, worked to remove the boy's accessory thumb in a short amount of time. Following the surgery, Karan's parents requested to keep the severed thumb so that they could use it in a religious ceremony with a local spiritual leader.



CASES BY GENDER:

Female – 62

Male - 82

CASES BY AGE:

Youngest – 6-years old

Oldest – 85-years-old

CASES BY TYPE:

Appendectomy
Cholecystectomy
C-Section
Dentistry
(Total procedures) 32
Exam under anesthesia
Excision accessory
Right thumb
Excision of Cyst /
Mass / Scar
Excision Warts
Fistulotomy /
Fistulectomy
Hemorrhoidectomy
Hernia Repair
Hysterectomy
Incision and draining of vaginal cyst
Oophorocystectomy
Reconstruction ear deformity
Reconstruction Ear Pinna
Reconstruction lip deformity
Release Burn Contracture
Release Scar Contracture
Repair congenital ear deformity
Sacral Colpopexy
Sphincterotomy
Steroid Injection
USLC



The Team

Team Leader

Mukul Parikh, MD

Team Coordinator

Cheryl Arthur, PMP

Surgeons

Kenneth Arthur, MD
J Bret Delone, MD
Parul Krishnamurthy, MD
Bipinchandra Patel, MD
Justin Rosenberger, DO
Jeffrey Segil, MD

Anesthesia

Jennifer Causey, CRNA
Jessica Clough, CRNA
Sharad Khetarpal, MD
Suzanne Miller, CRNA
Mukul Parikh, MD
Neelima Parikh, MD
Thomas Zouki, MD

Surgical Technologist

Karmae Amsbaugh

Dental Procedures/Surgery

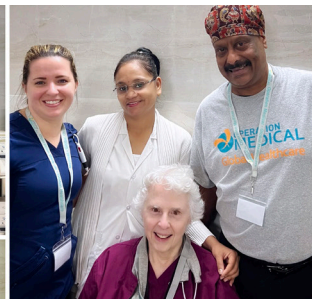
Dr. Dinesh Bhavsar

Nurses

Laura Mae Amsbaugh, RN
Diane McMichael, RN
Christine Otto, RN
Dinkal Patel, RN
Bonnie Pepper, RN
Aubrey Schober, RN

Support

Cheryl Arthur, PMP
Rise Enoch
Krishna Iyer
Margaret Marchaterre
Pratima Patel
Avni Sanghvi
Matthew Segil



Team Leader Impressions



Mukul Parikh, MD

Past Chair, Anesthesia Department, UPMC Harrisburg
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

We were delighted to return to Khambhat, India for the third time in the last 10 years and also after the COVID hiatus. As in the past, the host team did an excellent job of patient selection and pre-screening for the scheduled surgeries. The Operation Theater staff was well prepared, receptive and welcoming to our team. Once again, it was a very rewarding experience for all of our volunteers. We look forward to coming back for a similar experience serving the needs of the local population.

In recognition of Khambhat's local need for new Autoclave sterilization equipment, Operation Medical and its team members have donated \$7,000 to Cambay General Hospital towards this purchase.

Special Thanks

We could not conduct mission camps without the support of our generous sponsors. We are most grateful to Hemendrabhai Patel for his support of this camp including ground transportation, meals, housing and supplies. We also recognize Dr. Bhupendra Patel and Dr. Thakore Rana for a lovely dinner and time to socialize on Monday evening.

Trip Coordinator Impressions



Cheryl Arthur, PMP

Executive Director, Operation Medical
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

It was great to be back in Khambhat and see all of our friends and colleagues at Cambay General Hospital. Their genuine hospitality and gratitude are unmatched. This was my 14th mission trip and I am always astounded how so many people can come together, many for the first time, and form a cohesive team in a matter of hours. I feel privileged to have been part of such an energetic and talented group of professionals making a difference for the patients we served in the community.

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.