Improving Rehabilitation Outcomes in Guatemala: A Collaboration between Emory’s Doctor of Physical Therapy Program and the Rehabilitation Department at Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro

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Team Members/Schools

- **Lori Northcraft**, Rollins School of Public Health and Division of Physical Therapy, Emory School of Medicine
- **Susan Freed**, Division of Physical Therapy (PT), Emory School of Medicine

Project Partners

- **Rehabilitation Department**, Obras Sociales del Santo “Hermano Pedro,” Antigua, Guatemala

Populations/Communities Served

- 230 residents of Hermano Pedro with permanent disabilities
- Rehabilitation staff & international volunteers
- Service Learning Program, Emory DPT Program

Project Timeframe

- February – April 2009: Established project goals and developed proposal with local partners
- May – June 2009: Developed a pre-trip survey and distributed it to the director of the Rehabilitation Department
- Mid July – Mid August 2009: In Antigua, Guatemala conducting project with rehabilitation staff at the hospital

Project Goals

- **Capacity Building**
  - Improving skills and effectiveness of the hospital’s rehabilitation staff and non-professional volunteers
- **Evaluation**
  - Efficacy of previous Emory PT projects at Hermano Pedro
  - Bilingual patient-specific activity materials for volunteers
  - Training methods for rehabilitation staff

Expected Outcomes

- Evaluate methods used in Emory PT’s long-term collaborative project with rehab staff at Hermano Pedro
- Initiate new structure for case-based teaching with “local staff training local staff” in focus groups
- Share problem-solving skills with local therapists
- Teach basic measurement techniques & documentation
- Decrease magnitude and number of upper and lower extremity deformities in group of residents chosen by local therapists

Progress to Date

- **18 Case-based teaching groups (1 hour each)**
  - Each with 2 Guatemalan therapists, Emory DPT/MPH student & DPT faculty member, patient with upper and/or lower extremity deformities selected by local staff
- **8 Qualitative Interviews**
  - Hospital staff & community volunteers
  - Staff of local medical service organizations
- **2 Focus Groups**
  - staff therapists including inter-therapist teaching and practice of clinical skills
- **2 Educational sessions**
  - reviewing & practicing clinical skills with rehab staff
- **1 updated volunteer manual**
  - compiled previously developed bilingual patient-specific materials into a common location

Next Steps

- Follow-up with hospital volunteer coordinators to monitor implementation of volunteer manual
- Service-learning trip (Jan. ‘10) to Hermano Pedro involving Emory PT students and faculty
- Include case-based teaching groups, tailored to therapists’ needs highlighted in qualitative interviews

Practicing range-of-motion measurements during a rehabilitation staff focus group

Case-based teaching group evaluates hand splinting option for child with cerebral palsy

Antigua, Guatemala

Hermano Pedro