

Mission Moment

November 2019

USPI Facility Donates C-arm to Improve Care Options for the Honduran Community

Hospital Evangelico in Siguatepeque, Honduras has been providing care to the people of Honduras since its inception in 1949. The hospital offers care ranging from preventative care to surgery through many services and programs in order to best support the community. Unfortunately, due to minimal resources, training, and equipment, the hospital has remained limited in the extent of surgeries and procedures it can offer. Three years ago, Dr. Glaser, a pain physician at USPI's **Hinsdale Surgery Center** in Hinsdale, IL, began a conversation with the board and physicians of Hospital Evangelico about a mission that was ultimately successful through partnership with Hinsdale Surgery Center.



Dr. Glaser and his wife, Anne, have volunteered at an orphanage in the city of Comayaqua, Honduras for many years. It was there that the orphanage operator first told Dr. Glaser about Hospital Evangelico, noting that it was one of the few Christian hospitals that provided care to the poor without the corruption that sadly exists at many healthcare facilities in Honduras.

Despite the high number of manual laborers in the country, Dr. Glaser learned that there was only one Interventional Pain Management Specialist in all of Honduras to treat issues such as back pain and trauma, and the doctor was located in the far north at a for-profit practice. Siguatepeque is a city of 100,000 people located in the center of the country, leaving many unable to receive minimally invasive treatment for pain relief.

Seeking to overcome the disparity, Dr. Glaser conversed with the physicians and the board at Hospital Evangelico regarding the creation of an Interventional Pain Management service line.

Obtaining a C-arm was vital for this mission. A high-quality C-arm is required for spinal procedures and it would not be possible to perform the interventional pain management procedures needed without this piece of equipment. Fortunately, Dr. Glaser had identified a potential opportunity.

“Dr. Glaser came to me at the facility one day asking if I thought USPI would be willing to let us donate our second C-arm to a mission he was fulfilling in Siguatepeque,” shared **Brenna Fazio**, Administrator at Hinsdale Surgery Center. “I knew briefly about his involvement in Honduras, but became increasingly interested in the need he was presenting. After all, our second C-arm was an older model that we only used as a back-up, and it had already fully depreciated.”

Brenna and Dr. Glaser presented the idea to the facility's board, and, upon approval, initiated the appropriate process at USPI for donating the C-arm.

"Safely delivering the C-arm to Siguatepeque was not easy!" shared Dr. Castillo, anesthesiologist at Hospital Evangelico. "Dr. Nasralla, a long-time staff member at the hospital, assisted Anne Glaser in getting the machine to Miami, where it was stored in a port and then shipped to Hospital Evangelico. Thankfully, only the bed required minor repairs to two broken wheels, but the rest of the equipment was checked by a technician and approved for use."

In the meantime, Dr. Glaser visited Dr. Castillo and mentored her using an old C-arm in the city of Tegucigulpa.

Two weeks following the delivery of the C-arm, 40 patients received interventional pain management at Hospital Evangelico within two days. The hospital is now able to offer access to state-of-the-art treatment for pain to all individuals regardless of their ability to pay. Physicians at the hospital expect the C-arm to increase the number of patients receiving specialized care across several service lines, with five to ten patients receiving pain management care every week. Urological procedures, endoscopic surgery, minimally invasive procedures of the biliary tract and trans operative contrast studies in general surgery and orthopedic surgery will also benefit from the improved level of diagnostics provided by this C-arm.

Additionally, new procedures such as percutaneous nephrolithotomy, close and open reduction of fractures and endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography are all new procedures now possible at the hospital.

Dr. Glaser continues to mentor Dr. Castillo in the subspecialty of Pain Management, and has trained the Hospital Evangelico staff as well in operating the C-arm. Hinsdale Surgery Center hosted Dr. Castillo for an observation of Dr. Glaser's procedures, and the pair was also fortunate to receive a cadaver purchased by Central American Mission of Dallas (founding body of Hospital Evangelico). The American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, thanks to the support of founder and CEO, Dr. Lax Manchikanti, handled the logistics and provided a training venue for Dr. Glaser and Dr. Castillo.

"Interventional Pain Management is a relatively new medical subspecialty in the United States, and to be able to offer access to these procedures to individuals in Honduras is a wonderful achievement that my wife and I are extremely excited about," shared Dr. Glaser.

Dr. Castillo is slowly building an independent pain practice, and continues to improve through reading and building her knowledge base and technical skills. The C-arm was one of the missing pieces for her to further her commitment and dedication to providing excellent care for her patients.

"Training Dr. Castillo with the aid of her supportive husband and stand-in interpreter, Dr. Canas, a urologist at the hospital, has been a fun and exceptionally rewarding opportunity," shares Dr. Glaser. "The patients we have interacted with are thrilled to have the opportunity to receive the state-of-the-art care that this C-arm now allows. Word has already gotten out, and some patients have traveled from over three hours away to receive care."