

peacecare and GCHC model

This project utilized the Global Community Health Collaborative (GCHC) model and holds as its principle goal to positively impact global health disparities by specifically addressing the global burden of disease, the global shortage of health care workers, the deficiency of primary health care in low-income countries, and the deficiency of global health research. Access to quality health care in areas where this collaborative is focused is difficult to obtain, primarily due to the geographically dispersed area and the limited number of trained personnel. In training additional health care workers and improving the skills and knowledge base of existing health care workers, individuals in remote villages will have increased access to quality medical care. After projects in Senegal and Ethiopia, peacecare is expanding to a third site in the Dominican Republic.

Partnership Formation

Peace Corps Dominican Republic recommended youth sector volunteer Rosa Lopez as a great PCV to collaborate with peacecare in a new project. She does a lot of health promotion through youth leaders in the Guaymate community. peacecare first contacted Rosa in August of 2012 and since have worked closely with Rosa in developing this project.

Site Visit

The first site visit of the pcDR project occurred on March 10 – March 19, 2013. The UIC team consisted of Dr. Amy Huang, Med-Peds faculty, Dr. Nate McLaughlin, Family Medicine faculty, and Dr. Lillian Holloway, Family Medicine PGY-2. The team arrived in Santo Domingo and met with the PCDR director Art Flanagan and volunteer coordinator Carole Kessler. Art and Carole encouraged the continuation of collaboration of Peace Corps Volunteers and peacecare projects in Guaymate.

The team arrived in Guaymate, a municipal with population of 17,000. Over 40% of the population is from the 30-plus bateyes – housing communities for sugar cane field workers – around Guaymate. Guaymate has a public hospital, where they provide emergency services, deliveries, Cesarean sections, and simple surgeries. There is also a primary care clinic in Los Cocos, the biggest and poorest neighborhood of Guaymate. There are no health care services in the bateyes, and it is often too expensive and/or too far for the people in the bateyes to seek medical attention.

PCV Rosa Lopez has been in the Guaymate community for over a year. Several months before the site visit, Rosa invited community leaders and prominent youths to serve in the community advisory board (CAB). During the site visit, the UIC team had three meetings with the CAB, including a combined meeting with the Access to Health team from Northwestern University. CAB members readily identified teenage pregnancy, STIs, HIV, and inconsistent record keeping as main health issues in Guaymate. Fernando Torres, a math teacher in the Guaymate public elementary school, accepted the role as the CAB leader. The CAB expressed great enthusiasm with the project and is

eager to formally start the community assessment phase.

The UIC team also made contacts with local NGOs and physicians to describe the project, and visited Clinica de Familia La Romana, a comprehensive primary care and HIV clinic in a city 40 minutes from Guaymate. The staff of la Clinca provided a lot of support and ideas to the team. This was a short but invaluable and productive trip to make first-hand connections with the Guaymate community.