

HEAD & NECK OUTREACH

Erudio | Investigatio | Chirurgia

Mission Statement

Improving third world health care through sustainable program development with education (Erudio), research (Investigatio) and surgery (Chirurgia)

Who We Are

The Head & Neck Outreach (HNO) program was founded in 2014 after Chad Zender, MD and Katrina Harrill, RN developed a collaborative program with Dr. Jeff Otiti and the Uganda Cancer Center Institute (UCI). The HNO program includes research, education, and surgical work, supported by Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals of Cleveland. We have also had the honor of collaborating with Dr. James Netterville and his team from Vanderbilt University and Dr. Jeff Mueller from University of Chicago.

Improving Care

Accurate documentation is critical for effective and safe patient care. Standardizing record keeping for patients can be challenging in East Africa due to the paucity of informatics infrastructure in the region. One area of focus for this surgical camp was to institute standardized forms for preoperative evaluation, operative notes, daily progress notes and discharge instructions. Kate Clancy (Case Western Reserve SOM MS4) also formatted an electronic medical record (EMR) where these forms will be uploaded and stored for future camps. Not only will this help patient care for our future trips, but we are working with Dr. Jeff Otiti to implement this standardized documentation plan for all surgical patients treated at the UCI.



Melissa's Journey....

Upon arriving into Entebbe airport, the feeling of excitement and anticipation is overwhelming. New sights, smells, and sounds startle the senses after a long journey. However, a special transformation happens over the next few days that turn this initial unfamiliar encounter with Uganda into an extraordinary experience that impacts each participant in different ways.



Melissa Partyka, RN joined University Hospitals as a nurse in the Mather operating room immediately after her graduating from nursing school in 2014. Over the past two years, she has become the team lead for the ENT service, specializing in Head and Neck intra-operative



Local Outreach

In an effort to expand the footprint of our program, we are initiating several projects with local outreach programs in northeast Ohio. Extreme winters in this area are a challenge for the homeless. In order to help those locally who are less fortunate, HNO is teaming up with Refresh Collective and the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless to help clothe those in need this winter. Expect more information on this and other projects next spring.

More Information

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care. In May 2016, Melissa was ready for a new challenge and committed to joining the HNO team for the fall trip.

Melissa had never been overseas. As her first experience approached, she prepared by talking to past participants about their trips. These stories would not completely prepare her for the journey to come. Melissa reported that she became quickly aware of the cultural differences, specifically how easily people in America become frustrated with small things. "It really makes you think about the things that matter," she said. "They [The people in Uganda] are always happy and grateful no matter, even when they have way less resources than we do in the U.S." In Uganda, Melissa experienced a new definition of "need," one where simple luxuries like running water and electricity were not overlooked. She left Uganda eager to return to her family, friends, and colleagues with a new appreciation and gratitude for the resources that are all too often taken for granted in America.

Julius's Sore Throat

Little Julius had not been swallowing for months, two to be exact. Julius did not understand why he was not getting better, why he could not eat most foods and why his mother was worried. His mother, on the other hand, knew exactly what had happened. She was distraught because Julius had ingested a coin months earlier, and he had not been acting right since. She had been to several medical clinics who were unable to help.



Our camp schedule was full the day they arrived. An x-ray was done and it was clear Julius had a coin lodged in his esophagus. Swallowing coins or other foreign

objects is a common problem in the western world and one easily addressed within a matter of hours. Julius had suffered for months. We had to help.

After gathering the necessary equipment from Mulago Hospital, Julius underwent a 20 minute procedure and recovered coin free on the children's ward. Scenarios like this are common in Uganda, a country of 37 million people with a vastly disproportionate number of otolaryngologists—approximately 17. It's this need that drives HNO to continue the work in Uganda through surgery, education, and research.