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## Holy Family Surgery Center Physical Therapist Informational Packet

### Facility and Staffing

The Holy Family Surgery Center (HFSC) is a permanent, modern, and clean facility modeled off U.S. ambulatory surgical centers. It has 3 operating rooms, 7 clinic/overnight bays, and dental and eye clinics. Watch this [video](#) for a view inside the center. Dr. Merlin Antúnez, HFSC's Medical Director, performs orthopedic surgeries year-round with the support of over 20 local staff. Carlos Claros is HFSC's Administrative Director.

There are currently two NPH volunteer physical therapists from the Netherlands who split their time between seeing surgery center and NPH patients. On Mondays, Hester Jonkheer works in the surgery center, and on Thursdays, Nienke Boersema is present. They are happy to answer any questions you may have, and you are welcome to contact them prior to your trip.

*Nienke:* [njboersema@gmail.com](mailto:njboersema@gmail.com)

*Hester:* [hesterjonkheer@xs4all.nl](mailto:hesterjonkheer@xs4all.nl)

Honduran interpreters are available in the surgery center to provide English-Spanish interpretation, as well as guidance on local culture and context.

### Clinical Scope

HFSC is an ambulatory surgical center that provides high-quality, U.S. standard surgical care. Scheduled, elective surgeries are performed during normal business hours. HFSC does not offer any emergency services, surgical or otherwise. If an emergency arrives at the center, the patient is stabilized and transferred to the nearest hospital in Tegucigalpa. Procedures requiring multiple night stays or urgent second stages are generally not permitted.

### Specialties

Medical mission teams allow HFSC to perform more complicated cases and expand the available specialties. Most specialties are scheduled at least 3 times per year.

HFSC currently provides surgical services in the following specialties:

- Orthopedics
- General
- Urology
- Gynecology
- Ear, nose, and throat
- Ophthalmology
- Surgical oncology
- Spine

### Patient Selection and Scheduling

HFSC provides free surgeries to patients who would otherwise not have access to high-quality surgical care. Patients are selected based on financial and clinical need. Most patients are adults from surrounding communities, though patients come from all over the country. With regularly scheduled medical missions, HFSC is able to meet the demand for services. Guidelines exist to prioritize cases and limit daily patient volume. These guidelines also ensure sustainable work schedules for our staff and allow patients to travel home safely before dark.

**General Medical Mission hours:** 7:00am – 5:00pm (2:00pm on designated Short Days)



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**Clinic hours:** 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

**First surgery begins:** 7:00 am

**Last patient leaves OR:** 4:00 pm

*Variability in cases may require flexibility in these hours.*

### Physical Therapy at HFSC

At the surgery center, physical therapy revolves around two basic work flows: 1. pre-surgical instruction and/or post-surgical education and 2. primary care clinic support.

### **Pre and Post-Surgical Instruction**

- Pre and post-surgical needs are dependent on the type of medical mission you attend.
  - For example, if you attend an oncology mission, the PT can be engaged in pre-surgical instruction about lymphedema risk, positioning, nutrition, exercises, and post-operatively, focusing on touching the surgical side, reviewing positioning and exercise.
  - For orthopedic missions, you may just see patients post-operatively. Everything depends on the size of the caseload, the physicians involved, timing, etc.
  - All patients will go home either the day of surgery or the next morning, so it is important that you review the surgical list, talk to the surgeons and make sure you have an opportunity to teach and demonstrate before discharge. Family members should be involved whenever possible.
- There is no specific requirement for documentation of educational sessions.
- The surgical system is divided into pre-op, phase I PACU, and phase II PACU (prep to go home). Therapy usually takes place in phase II, although you are welcome to see patients in pre-op.

### **Primary Care Clinic**

- The clinic is a very busy place, and there are often many patients waiting for their appointment. Some have come from a great distance. Two full-time, OWS Honduran general physicians see patients in clinic. They are bilingual in English and Spanish. They are supported by a team of local nurses. This team is used to working without a PT, so they are constantly engaged in teaching and showing exercises, and doing many activities where PTs can be helpful.
- Sometimes, there will also be 1-2 volunteer physicians also seeing patients in clinic. They are generally family medicine physicians, internists, or cardiologists confirming surgical diagnoses, optimizing patients for surgery, or providing preoperative clearance.
- Please introduce yourself and make yourself available to the local primary care physicians. They will welcome your expertise. Many post-operative cases, as well as new acute and chronic injuries and conditions, will come to the clinic. You will be asked to step in to one of the patient “bays”, and the physician will brief you and explain to the patient why you are there.



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- Documentation is encouraged in these cases. Outside each bay there will be a stand-up charting station where you can add a brief narrative note (1-4 lines) indicating your assessment and intervention.
- Patients can return as much as often as indicated to see you while you are there, though this is limited by clinic space and patient ability to travel to the clinic. Depending on transportation and distance, some patients may want to return 1-2 times during the week. Be sure to first check with the patient coordinators to confirm availability of space and to leave the patient's name and the day and of their appointment.
- There are two NPH volunteer PTs on site who primarily serve the children on the ranch with special needs. If you see a case that definitely requires ongoing care, and the patient is willing to come, you can arrange for treatment one time per week by the NPH PTs. Confirm days and times with the therapist, and be sure to leave detailed instructions.

### Supplies

- There is a multi-drawer set of portable shelves in the last bay in the clinic that says "Fisioterapia" on the outside. Here you will find things like a gait belt, goniometer, theraband, biofreeze, over the door pulleys, and hot/ cold packs for home use.
- Near the linens area (across from the doors leading to the sterile area), you will find a storage area for braces, crutches, canes, and walkers for patient use. If a patient will be taking home an item, they need to sign a loan form with one of the Patient Coordinators.
- Post-operative handouts for common surgeries at HFSC can be found in the bottom two drawers of the file cabinet in phase II (in English and Spanish). A copy machine is available at the clinic main desk for copies of home exercise handouts.
- One option for teaching is to use short patient education videos in Spanish. There is Wi-Fi on site, and as long as you are not downloading huge files (the bandwidth is limited), you can show your patient YouTube or other relevant videos, as needed. The primary focus of their time with you is definitely hands on treatment, but use videos if you are struggling to explain or show something. If you think you may use this option, consider bringing your own laptop or iPad, as extra laptops in the surgery center are very limited.
- Supplies such as therabands and biofreeze gel can be given to patients to keep. Other supplies such as shoulder pulleys, basic splints, and therapy balls will need to be returned. If you provide any of these supplies to patients, be sure to write down the patient's name and supplies loaned. Provide this information to the Patient Coordinators in clinic so they can ensure the supplies are returned.
- Use creativity to educate patients about simple PT supplies they can make at home. For example, patients can easily make by filling a bag with uncooked beans or rice. For pain reduction, patients can soak a towel in hot water to make a warm compress.

**One World Surgery is currently in need of donations of the PT supplies listed below.**

All donated supplies will need to be transported to Honduras in your luggage and need to be registered with Honduran customs. OWS also requests the ability to pre-approve all other donations to ensure the items can be used at the facility. **Please contact**



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**[medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org) by 40 days prior to your trip to register the items and obtain a customs letter.**

- Thermoplastic sheets (50X60cm, 3 or 4 mm thick), splint making materials
- Portable folding exercise bike
  - *Example:* <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0027ZNH2O/>
- Basic splints, especially EVO's
- Stress balls
- Inflatable neck rehabilitation pillows
- Velcro tape roll (female and male type, strong medical Velcro)
- Reacher extenders/grabbers

#### Additional Information

- This is probably the first time a patient has ever see a physical therapist. Take extra time to explain who you are and what you do.
- Patients come from all over the country for surgery. You should take into account the time and money required for them to travel to the surgery center. Is it necessary for a patient to come for an appointment once a week, or if you spend more time explaining the exercises well, can they do them at home?
- The surgery center does not always have physical therapists available, so the physicians are used to explaining exercises and providing patients with handouts. When discharging a patient after surgery, it is not necessary to schedule a follow-up PT appointment. At the surgical follow-up appointment, the physician will determine if PT is necessary. While all patients could benefit from PT, capacity to provide PT services is still limited.
- Since patients speak Spanish, make sure that any exercise handouts you bring are in Spanish. You can also ask the interpreters for assistance translating the handouts on-site.