



Service. Healing. Transformation.

Health and Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The health and safety of OWS volunteers, patients, staff, and the NPH community are top priorities. In partnership with premier surgical and primary care companies in the US like Optum, OptumCare, and Surgical Care Affiliates, OWS developed roadmaps to guide the resumption of medical missions. The phased plans include criteria for moving to the next phase and mitigation measures during each phase. Plans may evolve as more information about COVID-19 becomes available.

Medical missions will not resume until at least Phase II. See summaries of each phase below. Detailed plans are available upon request.

Phase II: Resuming Small Group Medical Missions

Medical missions of 15 people or fewer; only clinical volunteers in Honduras; clinical volunteers and adult general volunteers in the Dominican Republic; volunteers from vulnerable populations only with OWS/medical approval

Criteria to enter Phase II may include:

- Decrease in average number of new local cases over prior 7 days
- Local borders have re-opened, local travel restrictions have been eased, and flights in/out are regularly available with no indication of return to prior restrictions
- Local services such as public transportation, gas stations, and banks have re-opened
- U.S. Dept. of State decreases global health advisory from Level 4 "Do not travel" to at least level 3
- No significant increase in security risk
- Our local partner, NPH, permits visitors
- Local authorities permit medical missions

****As of December 2020, most phase II criteria have been met.***

Mitigation measures may include:

- Universal masking during transit and for the duration of the mission
- Pre-trip health screening for volunteers
- Daily health screenings for volunteers and staff
- Patient health screenings
- Limited capacity in facilities to enable physical distancing
- Limited patient volume and strict patient selection criteria (e.g. no dental or ENT procedures)
- Enhanced cleaning protocols, especially of high traffic and shared areas
- Enhanced food safety protocols
- No interaction with NPH children or staff

Phase III: Resuming Large Group Medical Missions

Medical missions of 50+ people; nonclinical volunteers over 18 permitted in Honduras; volunteers from vulnerable populations only with OWS/medical approval; no observation of surgical cases. Previous mitigation measures continue, unless evolving best practices indicate lifting them.

Phase IV: Lifting of Distancing Requirements and Other Mitigation Measures

Premier surgical and primary care companies have lifted distancing and mitigation measures. Vulnerable populations and volunteers under 18 may attend. Interaction with NPH children and staff is permitted. Patient and procedure restrictions lifted.

Contact medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org or 847-267-3539 with any questions.