



Service. Healing. Transformation.

## **One World Surgery Primary Care Physician Informational Packet**

### Facilities and Staffing

One World Surgery funds and operates the ambulatory surgery centers and primary care clinics in Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

#### **Honduras:**

The Holy Family Surgery Center has three operating rooms, one procedure room, 14 consult/overnight bays, two private consult rooms, a physical therapy space, imaging room, and dental and eye clinics. Dr. Merlin Antunez, an orthopedic surgeon, is the full-time, on-site Medical Director, and Dr. David Vargas is the Clinical Operations Director. Watch this [video](#) for a view inside the center.

The clinic is fully staffed with nurses and assistants. You will evaluate patients in bay areas separated by curtains. There will be 2-3 local primary care physicians on site to assist you, write prescriptions for patients, and provide local medical context. All primary care physicians will be assigned at least one volunteer support staff member (i.e. nurse, medical assistant, clinical assistant, patient coordinator, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student). We encourage you to recruit your own support person to join you. Physicians will be assigned an English/Spanish interpreter to work with them in clinic.

#### **Dominican Republic:**

The DR site includes an ambulatory surgery center with three operating rooms, a primary care clinic, eye clinic, and a visitor center. OWS has been hosting primary care missions in the nearby communities since 2019, and surgical missions began in 2024. Dr. Joice Morillo, an orthopedic surgeon, is the full-time, on-site Medical Director and Joanna Sun is the Operations Director.

Pop-up, temporary Primary Care clinics are hosted in the community (bateys) in various buildings including churches, schools, and other community buildings. Local community leaders' partner with OWS patient coordinators to identify patients for each mission. Medical missions typically visit 4-5 bateys each week. In 2024, primary care missions began taking place in the OWS onsite clinic. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about bateys and the view inside the center.

### Supplies

You should consider bringing the following:

- Stethoscope (highly recommended)
- Blood Pressure Cuff (optional but useful)
- Otoscope (optional but useful)
- Headlight (optional)

### Medications and Labs in the Clinic

Clinics in both countries have a small formulary of medicines to treat chronic diseases and help optimize the patient before and after surgery. In addition, there are medications such as antibiotics available for acute diagnoses.

Labs are limited (pregnancy test, urine analysis via dip stick, glucometer).

### Clinical Activities in Clinic

In the clinic, you will provide pre-operative clearance and surgical optimization. You may also confirm surgical diagnoses or assist patients with managing chronic diseases.

**Preoperative Clearance:** Please review the Pre-Operative Clearance Form linked in your welcome email and familiarize yourself with the GOLDMANS CRITERIA/SCORING. One World Surgery uses this model to assess cardiac risk during non-cardiac surgery. We also recommend reviewing the basics of reading a chest x-ray. Most patients will come with chest x-ray film and the radiologist reading, but on occasion, patients may only have the film. It may also be helpful to review reading a rhythm strip/EKG, as most patients will bring EKG results. Those who do not will have an EKG performed by one of our nurses. Most patients will also bring their labs values with them, and you will need to interpret accordingly.

**Surgical Optimization:** Often during the preoperative clearance, you may discover the patient is not appropriate/optimal for surgery due to uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, or perhaps even a new diagnosis. You will use your clinical judgment to optimize the patient for surgery by treating/educating the patient and suggesting the appropriate follow-up exam(s). This is recorded in the appropriate section on the preoperative clearance form. Patients returning for a subsequent visit for surgical optimization will be documented through a Primary Care Form, which is also linked in your welcome email.

**Diagnosis Confirmation:** Patients are often referred to One World Surgery for surgery, but the diagnosis is unconfirmed, or surgery may not be an immediate option. Often, patients are referred by a nurse or other medical provider at their local government clinic without being evaluated by a physician. Essentially, you will determine if the patient is a potential surgical candidate and if the diagnosis is correct. Our local staff physicians and surgeons at OWS can assist in making a decision, if needed. They can also provide recommendations regarding interventions/treatments that are realistic for the patient.

For example, a patient on the otolaryngology surgery waiting list may be on your schedule for diagnosis confirmation. This patient was referred by a nurse at a local government clinic to OWS. This patient was referred for surgery evaluation for breathing problems and/or snoring. Through your consultation with the patient, you determine this is not a surgical issue. You diagnose the patient with sleep apnea and suggest weight loss and discuss sleep hygiene. More costly interventions such as CPAP are not available to this patient. You also decide his breathing problem is nasal congestion from allergic rhinitis and prescribe loratadine, which is easily available. You may also note hypertension in the patient. Please address this and anything you feel pertinent to the patient's wellbeing. Keep in mind resources may be limited, and patient education may be your best resource.

**Diagnoses confirmations are commonly needed for the following conditions/ surgical specialties:**

***General Surgery***

- Inguinal Hernia
- Umbilical Hernia (surgery vs observation)
- Diastasis Recti
- Cholecystitis/Cholelithiasis

***Orthopedics***

- Chronic Osteoarthritis of Knees (replacement vs injections)

***Gynecology***

- Uterine fibroids
- Ovarian Cyst

***ENT***

- Chronic/Repeated Tonsillitis
- Suspicious Thyroid Mass
- Thyroid Adenocarcinoma

***Urology***

- BPH (surgery vs nonsurgical)
- Prostate Cancer (we will refer if diagnosis is obtained with pathology)

Clinical Scope

***Common Chronic Diseases***

Some diseases or conditions are more prevalent in the clinics. These diagnoses are not much different from common diagnoses in the US. The main difference is that management options in terms of medications, testing, and specialty referrals are grossly limited in comparison. However, One World Surgery has an onsite social worker who can meet with patients, and in some cases, may be able to provide financial assistance to help patients access these options.

Common diseases you will encounter are:

- Type 2 Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Obesity and its sequelae.... gall stones, sleep apnea, CAD etc
- GERD
- BPH
- Osteoarthritis
- Rashes (contact, fungal)
- Chronic Cough (COPD, Asthma)

***Infectious Illnesses of Honduras***

Certain infectious illnesses are prevalent in this part of the world including:

- Zika

- TB (immediate referral to public health clinic)
- Malaria (*not prevalent in San Pedro Sula, Dominican Republic and Tegucigalpa, Honduras. More prevalent in coastal/low altitude areas*)
- Pin Worms
- Dengue
- Parasites
- Chikungunya

With regularly scheduled medical missions, OWS can 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

**Clinic hours:** 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

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

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

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

In addition to primary care physicians, surgeons typically spend 3 days in the operating room and 2 days in clinic. Seeing patients in clinic helps line up surgical cases for future missions. All postoperative follow-ups are performed by our Medical Director or general physicians. In the Dominican Republic, surgeons may spend up to 4 days in clinic and 1 day in the operating room as surgical volumes increase.

#### *Typical Schedule for Volunteers*

Type of Day	Full Day	Half Day
Clinic	15-20 patients	8-10 patients

#### Supplies, Equipment, Medications

The center is stocked with basic medical-surgical supplies and specialty packs for every procedure. Most supplies are purchased in the U.S. and transported via shipping containers a few times a year. Suture, hardware, and implants are mostly donated, and inventory is limited. For smaller personal donations you might like to make, we recommend bringing donations of your preferred or requested items but only in small quantities as personal items on your flight. This helps avoid customs issues. You may also wish to bring your preferred surgical gloves and masks.

**If you have any questions about our supplies or equipment, contact Tiffany Healey, our Director of Clinical Services and Quality at [tiffany.healey@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:tiffany.healey@oneworldsurgery.org)**

**If you plan to bring any supplies or medications with you and/or to solicit vendors for any donations, please contact Michael Fry at [michael.fry@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:michael.fry@oneworldsurgery.org)**

There is a customs process in Honduras that requires OWS to register all donations with the customs office 45 days prior to the trip. We cannot accept any expired items, and we request the ability to pre-approve all medical donations to ensure the items can be used at our facility. If the items can be used at our center, our team can provide you with a customs letter.

The customs process in the Dominican Republic requires OWS to register all donations with the customs office 25 days prior to the trip. We cannot accept any expired items, and we request the ability to pre-approve all medical donations to ensure the items can be used at our facility. If the items can be used at our center, our team can provide you with a customs letter.

Equipment is primarily donated and may be a couple of models older than what you typically use. Some tests and medications are unavailable in country or cost prohibitive to our patients. Our local team can recommend alternatives.

#### Contacts

For clinical questions, please contact Tiffany Healey, our Director of Clinical Services and Quality, at [tiffany.healey@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:tiffany.healey@oneworldsurgery.org).

For more information on medical mission trips, visit <https://oneworldsurgery.org/medical-mission/> or contact the Medical Missions team ([medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org))