Mission of Hope

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Background

Established in 2009, Partners for World Health (PWH) is a nonprofit organization that collects donated medical supplies and equipment from healthcare facilities, manufacturers, other organizations, and individuals. We sort, analyze, and prepare these supplies and equipment for distribution to communities in need both locally and abroad. PWH is the only New England-based nonprofit organization that repackages and distributes medical supplies to aid, assist, and support those in need. A Managed Healthcare article from 2020 reports that the U.S. health sector spent approximately $5.9 billion on medical waste management in 2020 alone. According to a University of California San Francisco study from 2016, almost $1,000 is wasted per medical procedure on potentially reusable supplies and about $400,000 could be saved per year – for just one surgeon. Since PWH’s founding, the organization has successfully collected more than 5 million pounds of medical supplies that would have otherwise been discarded in local landfills. While mitigating negative environmental impacts by preventing medical supplies from ending up in landfills, PWH also seeks to further health conditions abroad through supply donations and personnel travel. Partners’ Medical Missions Program was founded to send medical professionals and students to developing nations to follow up on supply shipments to provide healthcare and increase health education and connection.

The University of Maine Chapter of Partners for World Health is an organization of passionate college students working to carry out the nonprofit’s mission. Our chapter dedicates over 500 hours per semester to collecting, sorting, and packaging medical equipment obtained from Eastern Maine Medical Center, St. Joseph’s Hospital, and other donors located in Penobscot county. We contribute to Partners’ mission of sending shipping containers of much-needed medical supplies overseas through our sorting of these goods. Later, we help PWH follow up on these shipments with medical mission trips by providing student volunteers. In previous years, UMaine students have had the privilege of participating in medical mission trips to Senegal, Uganda, Guatemala, and soon Kenya for the first time ever.

Our chapter takes an exceptional interest in maternal and child healthcare in developing countries after having been involved in the implementation of Project 10,000. A PWH initiative, Project 10,000 seeks to reduce infant and maternal mortality rates in communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Volunteers help provide women with empowering self-care knowledge as well as kits containing all the materials necessary for a sterile birth and items to tend to their newborns. Project 10,000 aims to provide these services to 10,000 women all across Africa. Our proposed project, Mission of Hope, is intended to overlap with Project 10,000 in May 2023. In addition to providing both knowledge and sterile supplies (Project 10,000), we will help these women make a safe plan for their pregnancy and delivery (Mission of Hope).

Due to the lack of resources and access to healthcare in many Kenyan cities, several mothers have undocuored births and undergo delivery outside hospitals. According to the United Nations Population Fund, nearly 5,000 Kenyan women and girls die annually due to pregnancy and childbirth complications. Over 80% of these deaths can be attributed to poor quality of care. Most of these women are left vulnerable with no proper plan set in place for a successful pregnancy. Therefore, these women must not only have accessible sterile birthing equipment to be used by their caregivers/midwives during their pregnancy but also be educated regarding the complications that may accompany delivery for them and their babies.

Project Summary

For this project, we will provide pregnancy planning services to 500 pregnant women in regions surrounding Kisumu, Kenya. We hope to provide relief to the number of unsuccessful pregnancies from what is predicted by the current infant mortality rate (IMR) and maternal mortality rate (MMR) in Kenya, which are approximately 32 infant deaths per 1,000 live births and 355 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, respectively. According to recent UNICEF statistics, 5.0 million children under 5 years of age died in Kenya in 2020. This corresponds to 13,800 children under the age of 5 dying every day in 2020. Once implemented, the IMR and MMR of the sample of women who receive help through Mission of Hope will be compared to the current rates. Women who receive this care will be surveyed before receiving pregnancy planning consultation, education, and a birthing kit. Then, the same mothers will be
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surveyed again by PWH and local Kenyan health centers to deduce the outcome of their pregnancies, determining the impact of this project.

Implementation
Steps for implementation of this project under the supervision of registered nurses:

1. To prepare for Project 10,000 in Kenya, supplies to be included in birthing kits will be gathered and packaged from our warehouses in Portland and Bangor. All educational materials and surveys for expecting mothers will be printed and finalized.

2. As May approaches, the trip’s logistics will be finalized with the founder and president of PWH, Elizabeth McLellan, who will also travel to Kenya and lead our team. This includes packing lists, air travel, housing, baggage, in-country transportation, translator services, visas, and food.

3. All University of Maine travel and risk management paperwork will be completed with the UMS Risk Management team.

4. The team of clinical and non-clinical personnel traveling to Kenya will meet for orientation, wherein all important information concerning the trip will be discussed.

5. The fieldwork for Project 10,000 and Mission of Hope will be performed where PWH registered nurses and students will administer services and implement data collection.
   a. Educational sessions will be provided for expecting mothers to learn how to maintain a healthy pregnancy and the possible complications that can arise during pregnancy.
   b. Expecting mothers will be individually surveyed to obtain a health history. Individual surveying, consultation, and further examination will help determine the following, if unknown:
      i. Expecting mother’s due date
      ii. Where the mother will go for delivery
      iii. How confident the mother is in healthcare resources available to them
      iv. Potential transportation for the time of the mother’s delivery
      v. Who will be delivering the baby
      vi. Other logistical considerations

6. PWH will partner with the health center in Kisumu, Kenya for the follow-up collection of data 4-7 months after the intervention to determine the outcomes of pregnancies. Evaluation of our findings will occur after the collection of results.

Peace, Sustainability, and Future Impacts
The pregnancy consultation component of this project will be essential for us to sow a continuous and imperative impact. Pregnancy planning consultation is indispensable as it will grant these women the power to monitor their health and pregnancy, promoting a greater level of peace within them. With other charities and organizations, these women will receive the necessary resources and supplies; however, they will not be provided with the education or support that comes with our project. With education and support, we can teach these women how to use the tools granted to them most effectively. By providing the necessary resources, sterile supplies, and information vital for a healthy pregnancy through Project 10,000, we will impart the necessary resources for positive health outcomes. With Mission of Hope, we are not only providing the materials needed for a healthy pregnancy but also the knowledge and the vital support of a solid plan which will lead to even more successful outcomes. These women, in turn, will share their newfound knowledge with their friends and families, causing the impact of our project to echo and live its worthwhile even in our absence.

Expected Outcomes, Personal & Community Growth
Mission of Hope will nurture peace and aid in monumental ways. Not only will we seek to promote the health and well-being of new and at-risk mothers, but we plan to build relationships that cross international, racial, religious, and cultural boundaries to bring people together regardless of disparate backgrounds for a greater purpose. Teen pregnancy and motherhood rates in Kenya stand at ~18%,
which suggests that about one in every five teenage girls between the ages of 15-19 years have experienced a live birth or are pregnant with their first child (KDHS, 2014). One goal of Mission of Hope is to serve as an important resource to these young women, providing answers and education. Back home, student volunteers will work to promote new positive perspectives on very real global health inequalities that exist in the modern day. A key component of PWH’s work is educating and spreading awareness to people in the New England area regarding global health gaps and problems we confront on overseas medical missions. Our chapter at UMaine is made up of a diverse group of students including international students and others from across the United States. Through the work we do, we hope to spread recognition and awareness of the importance of health education in our home and school communities. We hope this sparks a greater change in the way our healthcare systems make use of these supplies and promote activity to support disadvantaged populations around the world.

**Project Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Individual Cost</th>
<th>Total cost for 4 students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpreters/Transport in-country</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Admin Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**Total Cost Including Airfare</td>
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<td>$12,040</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

***Total Requested: $10,000***

*Admin Fee will contribute towards resources needed for work on the ground including: projector for educational purposes, printing of educational handouts in native languages, costs associated with baggage transport for necessary materials, and cell phone/service plan for communication while there. **“Total cost” indicates fees needed while on the ground. “Total cost including airfare” includes an additional $1,475 per person that will cover airfare (Airfare total for 4 students: $5,900). ***Costs to exceed the amount requested will be paid for by participating individuals and/or with funds from the UMaine Chapter of PWH.