Haiti Symposium: Northwestern’s Medical Response

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Disclosures

- International Medical Corp
Haiti Background and Facts

- Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas.
- Its population is 9.8 million according to UN 2008 estimates, with half of the population being under 20 years.
- GDP per capita of 790 USD, about $2 per person per day.
Haiti Background and Facts

- About 80% of the population were estimated to be living in poverty in 2003.
- Poverty has forced at least 225,000 Haitian children to work as restavecs (unpaid household servants); the United Nations considers this to be a modern-day form of slavery.
Haiti Background and Facts

- Haiti's richest 1% own nearly half the country's wealth.
- Jean-Claude Duvalier, his wife Michele, and three other people took $504 million from the Haitian public treasury between 1971 and 1986.
- Foreign Aid makes up approximately 30–40% of the national government's budget.
- From 1990 to 2003, Haiti received more than $4 billion in aid from the U.S.
Haiti Background and Facts

- During the Aristide era, drug trafficking emerged as a major industry (15% of all U.S. cocaine now passes through Haiti, PAP).
- Half of the children in Haiti are unvaccinated.
- 40% of the population has access to basic health care.
- 90% of Haiti's children suffer from waterborne illnesses and intestinal parasites.
Haiti Background and Facts

- 90% of schools are non-public and managed by the communities, religious organizations or NGOs.
- Haiti has a 55% illiteracy rate.
- More than half of children fail to reach the 5th grade, and only 1/5 reach secondary school.
- Over 80% of college graduates from Haiti have emigrated, mostly to the United States.
Haiti Background and Facts

- There are an estimated 600,000 Haitians in the United States, 100,000 in Canada and 800,000 in the Dominican Republic.

- Haiti, a nation of 10 million, does not have a single sewage treatment plant.

- An earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale occurred in Haiti.
- The epicenter of the earthquake was 17 km from the capital Port-au-Prince.

- Aftershocks measuring up to 6.0 on the Richter scale have been reported.
- Approximately 3.5 million people live in the affected areas.
- The 7.0-magnitude quake killed 200,000 people and left as many as 1.5 million homeless.

- Strongest earthquake recorded in Haiti.
- Significant damage to basic utilities (power, water, sanitation), transport, communication and health.
- Immediate health priorities included search and rescue for survivors trapped underneath the rubble, providing surgical/medical services to treat injured survivors, preventing wound infection and providing shelter, food, clean water and sanitation.
Le Plaza Hotel:
formerly The Holiday Inn
Dear Guests,
In order to keep our pool clean and in consideration to other guests, we would kindly ask you

Please do not bathe in the pool with your scrubs
Appropriate swimwear is required

For security reasons

Le Plaza Hotel
Hopital de L'Universite d'Etat d'Haiti
HUEH: Grounds Layout
- 3 ER Tents
- 3 Post-op Tents positioned behind the ER
- 3 Operating Room suites
- 8 Medical/Surgical Tents
  - 5 IMC tents
  - 1 Spanish tents
  - 2 Haitian tents
- 1 ICU Tents
- 2 TB Tents
- Medical Wards “Catacombs”
- Pediatrics
- Maternity
- Laboratory Tents
- Blood Bank
- Radiology
- Forest
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My Responsibilities

- 3 Post-op Tents positioned behind the ER
- 8 Medical/Surgical Tents
  - 5 IMC tents
- Medical Wards “Catacombs”
- 20 x 3, 15 x 5, 70= 205 patients.
Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned

1. The Role of a Medical Oncologist in Disaster Relief!
   - Human
   - Medical Student
   - Internist
   - Worker
   - Decision Maker
   - Care
Lessons Learned

- 2. The power and ability of one person to make a difference.
Lessons Learned

3. The volume of death, the absurdity of death and the inability to euthanize.
   - Human life remains respected and revered.
Lessons Learned

4. The importance of practicing medicine within the confines of limitations and restrictions.
Lessons Learned

- 5. The importance of a Universal Health Care plan.
Lessons Learned

6. Anonymity
Acknowledgements

- Dr. Jon Licht and the Division of Heme/Onc
- Northwestern University’s Center for Global Health
  - Robert Murphy, Carolyn Baer, Shannon Galvin
- International Medical Corp
- People of Port Au Prince, Haiti
Final Thought: Nursing School

- One of three official nursing schools in the country.

- Reduced to rubble killing 150 students.
Thank You