



P.O. BOX 980573  
YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN 48198

Dear Mission Team Volunteer,

Hope Clinic International (HCI) wants to thank you for your interest in being part of a medical mission team. The purpose of our international mission program is: To reflect God's hope-restoring love to children and their families, as well as staff and health care workers, by providing restorative healthcare in under-resourced areas. We work collaboratively with volunteers, local agencies and healthcare providers so that the resources and skills necessary to promote the health of children and their community are made accessible to all.

The following is information regarding our 2018 Mission trips to Nicaragua, Central America.

### **Brief History of HCI**

Dr. Dan Heffernan, a family physician, founded Hope Clinic International (HCI) in 1997 in Ypsilanti, MI as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Dr. Heffernan was moved to establish HCI after personally observing the poverty, lack of medical resources and overwhelming need in Nicaragua, Central America.

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Almost 40% of Nicaraguans lack access to licensed doctors and quality facilities. Despite recent efforts by the government to increase maternal and child health services to rural and distant areas, children are still being left behind. Surgical services for children are woefully inadequate due to insufficiently trained surgeons and lack of adequately-resourced children's hospitals. Treatable medical and surgical conditions are often undiagnosed and become life threatening. Families in this region live on less than \$2 per day and suffer hopelessness and despair as their children face high infant mortality rates, higher than average rates of respiratory diseases, neonatal sepsis, and congenital malformations.

**In 2001** we began by partnering with individuals of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in several Nicaraguan cities, providing short-term relief medical missions twice a year.

**In 2005** we opened **Tim's Clinic in Estelí, Nicaragua** to provide year around services. Every year, El Consultorio Medico Tim provides infants and children in this region more than 3,000 free medical consultations; distributes more than \$200,000 USD in free medication; and offers regular, coordinated follow-up care for children with chronic health conditions. Our work is coordinated with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health (MINSAs), as well as with hospitals and other physicians in Estelí. In 2014 we opened a clinical laboratory to provide more accurate and timely diagnoses for our patient population.

**In 2008** Dr. Joseph Lelli (an HCI pediatric general surgeon volunteer) began a partnership with Dr. Alfredo Valle, a Nicaraguan pediatric surgeon at the nation's primary children's hospital, La Mascota. The partnership between HCI and Dr. Valle has contributed to a **pediatric surgery program** utilizing state-of-the-art laparoscopic surgical techniques to repair complex congenital gastrointestinal conditions.

**Currently** HCI coordinates with pediatricians and surgeons from the US to provide thousands of volunteer hours during semi-annual visits to supplement our Nicaraguan staff's year-round efforts. The visiting professionals treat up to 1,000 children during their two-week stay. They not only provide surgical and primary medical care for children, but they also exchange best practice techniques and protocols with Nicaraguan providers.

### **Volunteering for HCI**

Team members are selected on the needs of the team and their ability to represent Hope Clinic International. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age or be accompanied by a parent or adult given legal responsibility by the parent. Each participant is an ambassador not only for Hope Clinic International, but for all Americans. It is expected that all participants conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the mission of Hope Clinic International and that is sensitive to the cultural values of the Nicaragua people. Participants are expected to

demonstrate responsible behavior that builds positive relationships, affirms the value of the individual and culture, contributes to respect for self and others, and brings hope to the poor.

### **Team Member Responsibilities**

**The Medical Team** consists of about 15-20 members including : a team leader, two to four physicians, interpreters, 2-4 nurses, as well as medical students or other health care professional and pharmacy support staff. The team will normally see between 60-100 children in a day. Specific job descriptions will be provided for each role.

The **providers** must be willing to attend pediatric patients for generally minor acute care problems. Serious problems are referred to the local hospital and or Tim's Clinic for follow up. Providers must be willing to work with our Tim's Clinic Staff and local physicians where we have the cooperation of a local provider of care.

The **interpreters** are assigned first to work with any non Spanish speaking doctors and then to the pharmacy to explain to the parents how to give the medications. Interpreters do not need to know medical Spanish but must understand and translate colloquial conversational Spanish.

**Nurses, medical students and other health care professionals** that do not speak Spanish will either help with organizing the clinic, taking height and weights, blood pressure and temps, or in the pharmacy filling prescriptions. **Non medical professionals** normally assist in the pharmacy or in the waiting room area working with the children while they wait or helping in whatever way directed by the team leader.

### **Mission Team Costs**

Total cost of the medical and surgical team trips per volunteer for 2016 is:

**\$600 per week or \$1000 for 2weeks – (This does not include airfare).**

**Airfare typically runs about \$600 to \$800.**

### **The above cost represents the following expenses**

1. Round trip airfare expenses to Managua, Nicaragua.

Hope Clinic International will be responsible for making these travel arrangements (unless you would prefer to make your own arrangements), with every attempt to locate the lowest possible rates available. HCI is able to get group rates with the airlines only for 10 or more travelers from the same city, so if you will be flying out of Detroit please check with HCI before making your own travel arrangements. If HCI purchases your ticket and you cancel your trip after tickets are purchased you will be responsible for the full cost of this ticket.

2. Personal lodging and meal expenses. HCI will make these arrangements.
3. Transportation costs in-country.

### **The following are the personal responsibility of each team member:**

1. Expenses pertaining to all personal phone calls, wants or needs.
2. The obtaining and paying of insurance on personal equipment, and personal medical, travel, accident, life, and liability insurance. (Many insurance plans do not cover when traveling outside the USA. Travelers insurance through the airlines will be purchased for you unless you purchase your own ticket. We will ask for your traveler's insurance information if you purchase this on your own.)
3. The safety of personal belongings. Do not bring valuables you are not willing to lose.
4. Immunization expenses taken at your discretion. We suggest you consult your own physician and/or your local health department.
5. Passport and visa expense. (Visas are obtained on entry to Nicaragua for \$10.00 paid on arrival)
6. Help collect medical supplies and equipment as needed and instructed.

7. Participate in any orientation or packing team meeting. The packing meeting is essential to the success of the mission trip. If you live in Michigan, please ensure that you have blocked out time for attending. It is typically held on a Friday evening about two weeks prior to departure

**Hope Clinic International will arrange and be responsible for the following:**

1. All transportation in Nicaragua.
2. The coordinating of the entire medical trip and the liaison between HCI and our hosts in country.
3. Medical supplies and equipment for your mission.
4. Permissions to practice from the Ministry of Health and all customs permits. **We will need your license, specialty license, diploma, and CV and we will need all of these notarized 3 months prior to the trip** (We can notarize the documents in the office if you bring them along with the originals) .

If you are interested in volunteering for a Mission please complete the Registration Form and scan and email to [info@hopeclinicinternational.org](mailto:info@hopeclinicinternational.org) or **mail it to Hope Clinic International, P.O. Box 980573, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.**

Thanks again for your interest in volunteering; I look forward to hearing from you. Please give me a call if you have any question at 734-929-6620.

Michelle M. Rodriguez  
Executive Director  
Hope Clinic International