

## 2023 Guatemala Travel Planning edition

### Travel to Guatemala

#### Covid Vaccination Requirements:

While Canada and Guatemala have removed the requirement to show proof of COVID vaccination to enter the countries, **the US still requires this.** Volunteers who are travelling to and from Guatemala via the US will be asked to show proof of vaccination, even while transiting in an airport so please be prepared for this by having a paper or digital record of your vaccination status readily available.



Information about US requirements can be found at this link:

[Requirement for Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination for Air Passengers | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/requirements/covid-19/vaccines/index.html)

Use this link to obtain your national proof of vaccination certificate:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines/vaccine-proof.html>

### Antigua 2023 Team

Our surgical team is almost complete! We are still seeking an ENT surgeon, audiologist and two OR nurses. If you know of anyone who is interested, please let us know!

This year we will also have two volunteers travelling to Antigua with the surgical team to volunteer at Melody School in nearby Chimaltenango. The school is run by a Guatemalan - Canadian and has been supported through Medicos en Accion for many years.



# Planning your flight to Guatemala

Now is the time to begin planning your flight to Guatemala. Guatemala City (airport code GUA) is the only international airport serving the country. Major US carriers such as United, American and Delta have the best selection of flights. Flights from the US generally arrive between 7:15 and 11 pm.



We have found [Google Flights](#) to be a reliable source of information on current flights and fares.

For travellers from Western Canada, United Airlines, as of the time of writing, was offering the best flights/fares from Vancouver and Calgary via Houston.

## What to do after you have booked your flight

Medicos en Accion will book shuttles from the airport to our Antigua hotel. We do need to know your flight information so transportation can be arranged. The airport is about a 75 minute drive (at night) from the airport. After booking, please send us:

- the name of the airline you are arriving on
- flight number
- the arrival and departure date and time

Please send this information to: [medicostravel@gmail.com](mailto:medicostravel@gmail.com)

## Medicos-en-Accion Society

Medicos-en-Accion	Medicos-en-Accion/Guatemala	Medicos-en-Accion/Guatemala Surgical Teams
450 Greenstone Drive Kamloops, BC V2C 1N9	1431 Frontier Place Nanaimo, BC V9X 1P5	
<b>Medicos-en-Accion Society Board</b>		Team Leader: Brenda Uhrynuk
President: Gareth Eeson		Surgical Team Leaders : Jennifer Soucie, Norm Weir
Team Leader The Gambia: Gareth Eeson		OR Nursing Leaders: Robin Edwards, Gina Hawryschuk, Joanne Richard.
Team Leader Guatemala: Brenda Uhrynuk		PAR Nursing Leader: Joanne Marceau
Treasurer: Dennis Wallis		Secretary and Team Logistics: Cindy Reimer
Secretary: William Beaton		Communications: David Hill-Turner
Webmaster: Blake Farren		Volunteer Orientation: Joanne Marceau
URL: <a href="http://medicos-en-accion.com">medicos-en-accion.com</a>		Email: <a href="mailto:medicoscanada@gmail.com">medicoscanada@gmail.com</a>
		FB: Medicos-en-Accion Guatemala Surgical Team

## The 2023 Antigua Mission Team

### Surgeons

Jennifer Soucie (Team Leader)  
Sari Kives (Week 1)  
Herb Wong  
Eider Ruiz Mirazo  
Sean Gregg  
Paul Hardy

### Surgical Assistants

Daniel Ovakim  
Tina Webber (Week 2)

### Anaesthesia

Murray Reimer (Team Leader)  
Gord Wood  
Joel Parlow  
Harold Booy  
Grant Stefanyshen  
Michael Chong (Week 1)  
Kai Chen (Year 5 Resident)

### OR Nurses

Gina Hawryschuk (Team Co-leader)  
Robin Edwards (Team Co-leader)  
Elna Borgenesset  
Laurie Beauchamp  
Mina McCrea (Week 1)  
Tashina Morgenstern  
Koos Meijerhof  
Elizabeth Allen  
Jonathan Hsuing

Eva Jankowski  
Kat Kolecki  
Amanda Kerik  
Vanessa Espinoza (one week)  
Samantha Dupre (one week)

### PAR Nurses

Joanne Marceau (Team Leader)  
Amanda Paquette  
Erin Canty  
Ann Davies  
Christa Maguire  
Katrina Uy  
Cathy Mackenzie (Week 1)  
Libby McMullen (Week 1)

### Hearing Clinic

Audiologist(s) – not yet confirmed

### Support

Cindy Reimer  
Brenda Uhrynuk  
David Hill-Turner  
Jocelyn Faire  
Mari-Anne Meulenkamp

### Melody School

Stella Hansen  
Sophie Chow

## Trip Expenses

It is important to be aware that we operate in a cash-only economy in Guatemala. Please bring your trip funds in US dollars.

The two week trip costs are \$1200 US for physicians and \$800 US for non-physician volunteers. The \$300 Canadian application fee will be converted to US currency using the exchange rate on January 27<sup>th</sup> (arrival in Antigua) and deducted from the total costs. *Please bring new, crisp US currency as marked, torn, or crumpled bills are not accepted by Guatemalan banks.* This creates a problem for the hospital (they accept only dollars) as banks may refuse to accept the US currency.

Your trip fees include: accommodation at the Hotel Quinta de las Flores from January 27 to Feb. 11, ground transportation to and from the airport, breakfast and lunch at the hospital on team work days, and contribution towards the costs of doing surgery at the hospital (supplies, medications, IV fluids, oxygen, a per patient fee, and a contribution towards a house where pre-operative patients from outside of Antigua may stay pre-operatively.)

You will need additional money for dinners, travel on the free weekend between Week 1 and 2, local transportation (Tuktuks), laundry, souvenirs, etc. Local ATM machines are the best source for Quetzals, the Guatemalan currency.

## What does your donation support?

The hospital charges all teams a per patient donation of \$25 US, which helps to support the operations of the surgical suites and post-operative care areas. We also make an annual donation in support of Casa de Fe, a temporary home in Antigua for patients that come from remote areas of Guatemala for surgery.

The hospital is one part of the *Association Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro* (the Social Works of Saint Brother Peter). This association operates residential facilities for the permanent care of children, young adults and elderly, providing food, clothing, education, medicines, and everything else required to care for these people with severe physical and mental disabilities. A special residential program at the hospital provides care to babies with severe malnourishment problems. In addition, Obras Sociales operates a daycare centre for children of single, working mothers (mostly from the Municipal Market), as well as a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre.



A model of Hospital Hermano Pedro

## Tradition of giving a small gift to patients

Our team provides a small gift to surgical and hearing clinic patients. This gift often includes a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, pen, and sometimes socks or other items. If you have **unused** bottles of soap, shampoo, or body lotion (hotel sizes) or access to toothbrushes and toothpaste (travel size), please consider bringing these with you and passing them on to Joanne Marceau on arrival in Antigua. Small stuffed animals, stickers, and other small toys make great gifts for our younger patients.

There will be another newsletter before the mission that will provide information about Antigua arrivals and departures. If you have questions about your area of practice, please contact your specific team leader. For general questions about the Medicos organization and the mission, please contact Brenda, the Team Leader, [medicoscanada@gmail.com](mailto:medicoscanada@gmail.com)



## Need a Christmas idea?



### Make a difference to someone's life: Sponsor a surgery!

Sponsoring a surgery costs just \$100 CDN

#### Donation options

##### 1. Direct donation

Send a cheque supporting one or more surgeries to:

Medicos-en-Accion Society  
c/o 1431 Frontier Place  
Nanaimo, BC V9X 1P5

Make cheque payable to: Medicos-en-Accion Society  
Tax receipts are issued for donations supporting this project.

##### 2. Online via Canada Helps

Go to: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/medicos-en-accion-society/>

Find: Apply your Donation  
Scroll to: Option 4 - Medicos-en-Accion  
Antigua Surgeries

Canada Helps will issue your tax receipt immediately after your credit card transaction is processed.