

Volunteering and changing lives

The 2018 MeA mission to Antigua was a great success thanks to the commitment of volunteers who brought various essential skills to the team. It was also one of our largest teams to travel to Antigua.

One of the greatest challenges for mission organizers is recruiting the various professions that make a team. Participating is not always easy, vacation time must be booked in advance, flights booked, funds committed, and sometimes specialized equipment and supplies must be arranged as they aren't available in Antigua. We appreciate the time and effort team members contribute to ensuring the team has the tools it needs to carry out a successful mission.

And then there's Mother Nature! For many of us who have travelled to Antigua, the minor rumblings of Fuego have become part of the daily experience while larger eruptions are rare. We were all shocked this year when the volcano finally displayed its power with deadly consequences: small villages on the upper slopes of the volcano were hit by rock, lava, and toxic gases. Over 200 people were killed and property was destroyed. The city of Escuintla (located between Antigua and the Pacific coast) was most affected by the eruption and our host hospital in Antigua, Obras Sociales del Hermano Pedro has been involved in recovery efforts, assessing and treating citizens.

Since mid-June, Fuego has returned to its slumbering state. Surgical teams from North America and

Europe continue to travel to Antigua as the need for our services is unchanged. The Canadian government travel advisory for Guatemala (<https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/guatemala>) has not changed: "Exercise a high degree of caution in Guatemala due to the violence, roadblocks, strikes and demonstrations that occur periodically throughout the country." The Guatemalan government

makes great effort to ensure that Antigua is a safe destination for volunteers and tourists and in a dozen plus missions our team members have experienced only a couple of incidents of theft.

While there is civil unrest in Nicaragua, the political situation in Guatemala is stable.

This summer, we are noticing a subtle, but significant change, to recruitment for the Antigua mission. Inquiries about joining a mission are fewer and applications have been slow to come in. We still have significant gaps

in the team roster (surgeons, surgical assistants, OR nurses, and audiologists), and mission organizers are concerned about recruiting to fill these gaps.

As summer winds up, we ask that you take a few minutes to think about those in Guatemala who have come to rely on volunteers who provide the medical care they need. If you are interested in joining a mission, please send in your application (available at medicoscanada@gmail.com). We also ask that you please share your interest with colleagues who may be interested in joining us in 2019 or on a future mission.



To do the work, we need the people!

Upcoming San Benito Missions

Medicos-en-Accion will be returning to San Benito in the Pé-ten Department in November and February as the need is there for medical services that are inaccessible to many living in the area. "While our previous missions have been limited to ENT and audiology, there is capacity at the hospital for general surgery, too" said team leader Norm Weir.

Hospital Shalom, <http://www.newcovenantworldmissions.org/Hospital-Shalom.html> is a relatively new facility that is operated by a non-profit from Canton, Ohio. It has two ORs on the main floor and a number of patient rooms on the second floor. In addition to surgery, the team also offers an audiology clinic. MeA is exploring opportunities for expanding the surgical program to include general surgery.

Teams that visit Hospital Shalom tend to be smaller as the hospital is just developing its surgical program. If you are interested in joining the February 2019 team, you can apply using the Medicos-en-Accion Guatemala application form.

Flores is best known as the jumping-off point for the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Tikal, a 90 minute drive away. Closer to Flores, and not to be missed, is the large Mayan site of Yaxha, with over 500 structures and 40 stelae.

San Benito 2018/2019 mission dates

Saturday, Nov 3 - Saturday, Nov.10 (complete)
Saturday, Feb 9 - Saturday Feb 16, 2019

Antigua: 2019 Mission Recruiting January 25 - February 9

Anticipated Team Composition

Surgeons:

General: 2 (recruiting)
ENT: 2 (complete)
Gyne: 3 (recruiting 1)
Surgical Assistants: 3 (recruiting)
Anesthetists: 5 (complete)

OR Nurses: 12 (recruiting 7)
PAR Nurses: 7 (complete)
Audiologists: 2-3 (recruiting)
Hearing Clinic Support: 3 (complete)
Translators: 3 Complete

Please forward to colleagues who may be interested in joining us.

Application forms can be obtained by contacting us at MedicosCanada@gmail.com

About Medicos en Accion Canada

Formed in 2001, Medicos-en-Accion's volunteers provide surgical services, community health and education support in Guatemala and The Gambia.

Medicos-en-Accion
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Kamloops, BC V2C 1N9

Medicos en Accion - Antigua Surgery
1431 Frontier Place
Nanaimo, BC V9X 1P5

Medicos-en-Accion Board

President: Anna Peron
Vice President/Team Leader The Gambia: Jon Just
Vice President Surgery Guatemala: Brenda Uhrynuk
Vice President /Team Leader Medicine Guatemala: Brian Poelzer:
Treasurer: Dennis Wallis
Secretary: Christa McGuire
Website: Blake Farren

For Medicos - en - Accion / GuatemalaSurgical Division

Vice President: Brenda Uhrynuk
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Secretary: Cindy Reimer
Treasurer/Communications: David Hill-Turner
Director Orientation: Nadia Beaumont

Email: medicoscanada@gmail.com
FB: [medicos-en-Accion Guatemala Surgical Teams](https://www.facebook.com/medicos-en-Accion-Guatemala-Surgical-Teams)
URL: www.medicos-en-accion.com

Medicos-en-Accion is a registered charity in Canada.

Fundraising ideas for your 2019 mission

How to make a donation?

Direct:

Some people ask friends and family for donations to support their mission. Cheques can be sent to Medicos en Accion at our Kamloops address. Please ensure that the donor identifies that their cheque is to support you. Cheques are payable to Medicos en Accion.

Indirect:

Medicos en Accion is also listed with Canadahelps.org. On their home page the search term is Medicos en Accion Society.

- ◆ Under "donate to the charity now", enter the amount
- ◆ In the message box, please enter "Guatemala Surgery" for general team donations. If it is for a specific person, please enter the volunteer's name. Please include **Mission 2019**.
- ◆ After following the onscreen instructions, Canada Helps will issue a tax receipt to the email address provided by the donor.
- ◆ Note: For 2018 tax receipts, donations must be made before December 31, 2018.