Nurse joins in Project HOPE Africa mission

By DAVID ADLERSTEIN
620-599-1 | sp@TheTImes
DFAonline.com

An idea that started in the back of medical minds in Africa, one of two Project HOPE volunteer programs participating both in the rural health of the U.S. Navy’s Africa Partnership Station (APS) 2012 mission in Liberia and Ghana. The volunteers worked along side naval personnel to deliver health care and education while being aboard the USNS Mercy in 2010. Bauer is a nurse practitioner in addition to the medical surgery nurse working closely with Dr. James Steckelink with his gastroenterology practice at Women’s Hospital. She worked as a medical surgical and community health nurse in Liberia and Ghana.

Cherie Robinson, RN, a non-traditional graduate student at UNM, was the lead physician as well as the Director of the HOPE mission. Robinson’s role was to serve as the primary medical care worker, as well as the nurse practitioner for the medical care and training mission with Project HOPE. The mission was to provide medical care to the patients in the Republic of the Congo, which she did in the third day. “Even though the site was a rural and not easily accessible, we expect 150-250 people at most on the first day opened,” said Cherie.

The visitors were challenged to use one’s medical knowledge and skills to make a diagnosis, rather than rely on the tools and diagnostic procedures used in an American medical practice. “We just say, ‘this is what you have’ and treat it,” said Blair-Perrine. She worked in the front of the clinic triaging patients, weighing children, and labbing blood pressure. “It’s clear how important this clinic is to the people because they all came dressed in their Sunday-best clothes,” Blair-Perrine said.

With the masses of people dressed in brightly colored native dress, order was maintained with the help of the Ghanaian police and armed forces, and local nurses helped with translation, as most of the patients spoke a local dialect, Twi, and not English.

Within the hospital, local providers is one of the best parts of this mission. “It was as much as we teach them,” Blair-Perrine said.

In the spirit of being a part of the mission from beginning to end, doctors and nurses were all involved in the clean-up of the streets and made the hospital more pleasant. “We knew that we were going to help them, but they also helped us,” said Robinson. The nurses also gave all patients a chance to make sure their work was done properly.

To make their work more efficient and effective, the nurses and doctors worked closely with the local nurses who also worked in the recovery room and at times worked with the medical team,” said Dobson. She was amazed with the dedication of the nurses who had just come from the operating room. “It’s clear how important this clinic is to the people because they all came dressed in their Sunday-best clothes,” Blair-Perrine said.

With the masses of people dressed in brightly colored native dress, order was maintained with the help of the Ghanaian police and armed forces, and local nurses helped with translation, as most of the patients spoke a local dialect, Twi, and not English.

Within the hospital, local providers is one of the best parts of this mission. “It was as much as we teach them,” Blair-Perrine said.

In the spirit of being a part of the mission from beginning to end, doctors and nurses were all involved in the clean-up of the streets and made the hospital more pleasant. “We knew that we were going to help them, but they also helped us,” said Robinson. The nurses also gave all patients a chance to make sure their work was done properly.

To make their work more efficient and effective, the nurses and doctors worked closely with the local nurses who also worked in the recovery room and at times worked with the medical team,” said Dobson. She was amazed with the dedication of the nurses who had just come from the operating room. “It’s clear how important this clinic is to the people because they all came dressed in their Sunday-best clothes,” Blair-Perrine said.