

Penwood Dental Team Report

Each trip seems to take on a different character and meaning. This year God showed his grace in many ways. In the two weeks prior to leaving, we were able to find a Cavitron to serve as a replacement for the one that broke a couple of years ago. This Cavitron was located in Wadena and provided by Dr Wayne Howard. Many people had a roll in this and it didn't really fall together until the last minute as people were on the phone searching through storage spaces in the office to finally find it. This enabled us to provide better care for the patients we saw by allowing us a relatively efficient way to "clean" their teeth. This seems to be the most requested service we provide. We had to turn many who wanted their teeth cleaned away, as we tried to deal with the people who were experiencing difficulty with their teeth. We tried to do the cleaning while we were waiting for the anesthetic to take affect on these patients.

Also thanks to the efforts of my local dental supply company and repairman, we able to have made for a minimal amount a portable dental unit in which all we had to do was plug into the existing air and vacuum supply to be up and running. This investment saved us a lot of time in the repair category, as the units in the clinic are getting old and the lack of routine use and the age of the equipment and the high temperature makes the water lines clog very easily. I brought both of these units back to Fargo with me and can make them available for use on any subsequent trips. I figured if we had them here, we could service them and make sure they are working before we use them again.

We were able to provide dental care to 34 patients during our visit at Penwood. On these 34 patients we were able to perform the cleanings in addition, we did 40 restorations (fillings) and 6 extractions. We also went to Maranatha and screened 98 children for dental needs. Our hope was that we could get a couple of the most urgent back to the clinic and provide care for them. This plan did not work, as the parents did not bring the children to the clinic. On the positive side though, most of the children were in relatively good condition. Most of the supplies down there are getting old and out of date. We tried to go through and discard what we felt were unusable. I think a good word of advice for anyone planning to go to Penwood at this time would be, "If you think you are going to need it, bring it with you."

Again thanks are in order for all who make this trip possible and God for providing us the talents we use to help others.

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