

## **HELP Jamaica Medical Mission: Performs Surgery at Winchester Surgical & Medical Institute**

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The National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations' (NAJASO) Help JA Medical Mission team conducted its most recent medical mission to Jamaica September 9-20, 2015 serving more than 2000 residents in Red Pond, Point Hill, Kitson Town, Central Village and nearby locations in St. Catherine.

The New Jersey-based organization has been providing free quality health care services in Jamaica for the past 16 years to those that are in dire need of health care services. The Help JA Medical Mission team has served many thousands of Jamaicans over the years with its team of Doctors, Nurses and medical practitioners that make the trip each year to deliver their services. Co-Founder Dr. Robert Clarke stated, "We treated persons with eye disease, heart problems, diabetes, hypertension, and other illnesses." The team of twenty (20) doctors worked diligently to provide these much needed services to a large number of very appreciative patients, free of charge.

An isolated and heart-warming outcome of the mission occurred with the unplanned surgery on the Medical Mission bus driver by NAJASO Board Chairman, Dr. Richard Constable. The driver disclosed his herniated condition to Dr. Constable who in turn offered to help. Arrangements were made and the patient was taken to Winchester Surgical and Medical Institute (WSMI) in Kingston where Dr. Constable and Dr. Neville Graham performed the needed surgical procedure to a very grateful patient, again at no cost.

According to Mission Director, Dr. Rudolph Willis, the Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller is the inspiration for the annual medical mission to Jamaica. While serving as Minister of Labour and Social Security in 2005, Simpson-Miller met with members of the HELP JA medical team who were looking for ways to serve Jamaica better. "We asked her what we can do to help our country and she came up



*NAJASO Board Chairman, Dr. Richard Constable (right) performs emergency surgery on Medical mission bus driver during recent medical mission trip to Jamaica. At left is Dr. Neville Graham, NAJASO Jamaica Co-surgeon on the procedure performed at WSMI*

with the brilliant idea that since we are physicians and health care personnel, we could give back to the Health care system in Jamaica," said Willis.

The JA Medical Mission team also holds four fundraisers each year in order to gain the funds necessary to conduct the medical missions. The fundraisers include a raffle, a popular boat ride in June, an all-you-

can-eat picnic bash which is a family event in a country setting, and an annual Black Tie Affair coming up October 31, 2015, being held at the Hanover Manor 16 Eagle Rock Ave. East Hanover, New Jersey.

At a previous Black Tie fundraising event the Prime Minister lauded the work of NAJASO and the HELP Jamaica Medical Mission team noting that the medical team is a “true friend

and valuable partner in assisting those who are less fortunate”

The procedure performed by these doctors clearly reflects the words expressed by the Prime Minister. Not only was the patient spared the expense of the operation, the procedure performed as it was in a timely manner, lifted a tremendous emotional burden from the patient and certainly avoided the potential of future complications from his condition. Services to the many patients who are recipients of the HELP JA Medical mission contributions go a long way in screening and preventing medical situations that could have become much worse.



*Photo L-R Dr. Cooper, anesthetist, Dr. Constable, Nurse Kettle, surgical assistant Simpson, and Dr. Graham*