

## Report to the Canadian Friends of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti Improving Maternal and Child Health Outcomes in the Lower Artibonite Valley – 2017 Activities April 2018

### Maternal and Child Health at HAS

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Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti (HAS) gratefully acknowledges the Canadian Friends of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti for its ongoing support of maternal and child health programming at HAS. Each year, the hospital saves thousands of lives, particularly those of infants, children and mothers, dramatically impacting the health and well-being of the entire community.

Maternal and child health services account for nearly 60% of all services provided by Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti (HAS), between the hospital and comprehensive community health services. Through the services provided, HAS aims to improve maternal and child survival rates in Haiti, which are among the lowest in the world. From emergency obstetric care for high-risk pregnancies, to community-based education about various topics including breastfeeding, nutrition, and prenatal warning signs, HAS strives to meet the healthcare needs of mothers and children, and adapting its approach and services to address the evolving public health situation in the Artibonite Valley. In addition to the wide range of maternal health services, HAS also specifically focuses on mothers and their children until the child reaches five years of age in order to promote optimal health for local families.

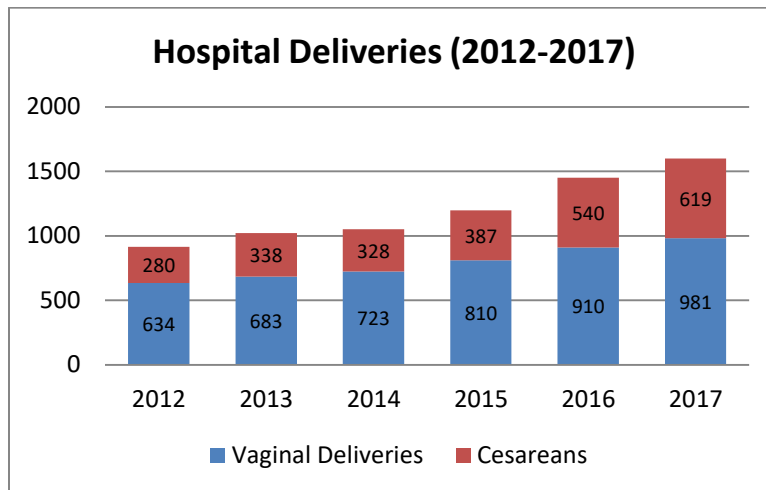
The extremely generous and loyal support of the Canadian Friends of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti allows us to continue to provide consistent, reliable, and effective healthcare to our patients – enabling HAS to fulfill its mission of collaborating with the people of the Artibonite Valley to improve their health and quality of life. The following report provides an overall summary of the maternal and child health services provided by HAS in 2017, as well as highlights some of the trends over the last five years in maternal and child health at HAS.

## Inpatient Maternity Health Services

The majority of pre and post-natal care at HAS is provided as a part of the extensive community health services – either in one of the four community health centers, mobile clinics, or home visits. However, the main hospital is equipped to provide high-risk, emergency obstetric care to women with pregnancy complications. If a woman seen during a visit at community health center, mobile clinic, or home visit is found to have a potential pregnancy complication, such as high blood pressure, she is immediately referred to the hospital where she will be followed for the remainder of her prenatal care and delivery.

Due to its long-standing history of providing high-quality health care to the most vulnerable populations, the demand particularly for obstetrics services continues to rise at HAS. As you can see in Figure 1, the number of deliveries occurring at the hospital has grown significantly over the past six years. This trend is expected to continue over the next several years – leaving HAS to consider innovative ways to support this increasing demand with its limited available resources.

**Figure 1: Growth in Hospital Deliveries (2012-2017)**



### Overall OB/GYN Services provided at the hospital in 2017:

- There were 7,997 consultations in the hospital's OB/GYN outpatient clinic.
- HAS' two full-time obstetricians admitted 1,911 women to the OB/GYN ward, an increase over the 1,783 admitted in 2016.
- There were 1,600 deliveries in the hospital in 2017, again an increase over the 1,450 deliveries in 2016.
- 619 (39%) of hospital deliveries were via C-sections due to the high-risk nature of these pregnancies.

## Community Maternity Health Services

HAS' four community health centers and 70-80 monthly mobile clinics are a fundamental part of the integrated community services network. It is here that the majority of primary and preventive care services are provided to community members. Services specific to maternal health include pre- and postnatal consultations, family planning services, and reproductive health education. Located in some of the most remote regions of the service area, the community health centers and mobile clinics ensure that quality health care is accessible to all of our patients, who may live up to eight hours' walking distance from the main hospital.

In addition to the health centers and mobile clinics, HAS also has a cadre of 49 community health workers. These individuals play a vital role in maternal health care through community education and home visits, encouraging women in their communities to attend regular prenatal exams at the nearest community health center or mobile clinic, teaching them about important milestones and warning signs during pregnancy and motherhood, and conducting post-natal home visits.

#### Overall maternal health services provided in the communities in 2017:

- In 2017 there were a total of 11,324 prenatal consultations conducted between the four community health centers and the 70-80 monthly mobile clinics – a 25% increase over 2016.
- 1,090 births were recorded in the community, all of which were assisted by a traditional birth attendant (in most cases, a HAS-trained matrone). This number again decreased slightly from the number of home births recorded in 2016 – potentially signifying the increase in demand for facility-based delivery services.
- There were total of 2,071 postnatal consultations, with 1,793 among the four community health centers, and 278 in mobile clinics.
- 23,870 family planning/reproductive health consultations were held among the community health centers and mobile clinics – representing a 13% increase over 2016, and most likely due to increased demand for family planning services in light of Zika Virus.
- In 2017 community health workers facilitated 1,923 community education sessions, reaching an average of 9,335 community members each month with vital health educational information – covering topics such as exclusive breastfeeding, childhood nutrition, signs of pregnancy complications, reproductive health/family planning, vaccination, good hygiene and sanitation practices, and many more.



### **Inpatient Children's Health Services**

HAS has a long-standing reputation for providing high-quality pediatric care, with over half of the available beds reserved for the various pediatrics wards (pediatric surgery, general pediatrics, nutritional rehabilitation, pediatric isolation, and neonatal intensive care). Additionally, the general pediatrics clinic and the pediatric surgery clinic combined make pediatrics the second busiest hospital outpatient clinic division, behind internal medicine. In 2017, children represented 32% of all admissions, but 46% of total patient days, indicating that their cases are often complex and require them to stay in the hospital for a considerable length of time. The children who are admitted to the hospital for care often suffer from serious, even life-threatening health conditions, including severe, acute malnutrition, infectious illnesses such as diarrheal diseases and upper respiratory infections, and injuries or conditions that require surgery and rehabilitation.

The following are the main hospital pediatric service numbers from 2017: There were 10,514 consultations in the hospital's general pediatrics clinic, and an additional 2,445 in the pediatric surgery clinic. Admissions to the various pediatrics wards included:

- 895 admissions to pediatric surgery
- 2,621 admissions to general pediatrics
- 179 children were admitted to the nutrition stabilization unit (malnutrition ward)
- 843 newborns were admitted to the neonatal ICU, an increase compared to the admissions in 2016

## Community Children's Health Services

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In addition to the services provided at the main hospital, HAS' community health centers, mobile clinics, and community health worker activities also emphasize child health in a variety of ways. Activities from nutrition screenings to immunizations to distribution of vitamins and deworming medication, are targeted at reducing child mortality, particularly in the "first 1,000 days of life" from conception to age two when children are the most vulnerable. During this critical time period, proper nutrition and health can impact a child's ability to grow, learn, and live a full, productive life.

In 2017, we maintained or increased service levels for most child health activities in comparison to 2016, indicative of the true and continued need for these services.

- There were a total of 40,808 general pediatric consultations among the four community health centers and 70-80 mobile clinics per month.
- 21,919 immunizations were administered in 2017 including all vaccines required by the Haitian Ministry of Health. HAS' community health team has the capacity to vaccinate many more children; however, we are dependent upon the MSPP (Ministry of Health) to provide sufficient quantities throughout the year, but there are frequent stock-outs at a national level.
- 1,454 children under one year old received all of the required vaccinations in 2017.
- Community health workers performed a total of 107,466 screenings for malnutrition for children 5 and under in 2017, an average of 8,486 per month.
- 266 children were treated for malnutrition at one of the 6 outpatient nutrition treatment sites.
- Approximately 2,061 children per month (between 6 months and 5 years) received their scheduled doses of vitamin A, which is important for preventing entirely avoidable yet potentially debilitating childhood blindness. In 2017, HAS distributed a total of 25,878 doses of Vitamin A.
- 10,487 doses of albendazole (deworming medication) were distributed to children less than 5 years old, an easy and effective way to prevent malnutrition, anemia and even death due to diarrheal disease.

## HAS Impact – The Zika Virus

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On February 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an international public health emergency because of increasing evidence that the Zika virus causes serious brain damage and neurological defects in newborns. In light of this new outbreak, HAS quickly developed strategies to

identify and respond to growing numbers of patients with Zika-like symptoms. With the generous support of FP2020 and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, HAS was able to implement a 15 month Zika Response program that included:

- Training and educational sessions for all clinical staff involved in direct patient care to ensure staff could effectively identify and diagnose signs and symptoms of Zika virus
- Improved facility and community-based disease surveillance
- Eight week-long Zika/Family Planning campaigns providing intense community mobilization and communication, as well as expanded access to contraceptives
- Targeted education sessions and radio emissions focused on increasing knowledge and awareness of the Zika epidemic and the importance of family planning

The program ran from October 2016 until December 2017, and was successful in increasing local knowledge and awareness of the Zika Virus, as well as changing societal beliefs and “norms” surrounding LARCs (long-acting reversible contraceptives) – drastically increasing demand for these methods of contraceptives. The tables below highlights the achievements of this program.

**Table 1: Total Contraceptives Distributed (Oct 2016-Dec 2017)**

Contraceptive Method	Health Centers	Zika/ Family Planning Campaigns	Total Distributed
Ovrette (pills)	1,428	97	<b>1,525</b>
Lofemenol (pills)	7,189	243	<b>7,432</b>
Depo-Provera (Shot)	23,444	1,144	<b>24,588</b>
Implanon (Implant)	727	1,078	<b>1,805</b>
IUD (Intrauterine Device)	15	53	<b>68</b>

**Table 2: New FP Users (Oct 2016-Dec 2017)**

Contraceptive Method	Health Centers	Zika/Family Planning Campaigns	Total New Users
Ovrette (Pills)	32	7	<b>39</b>
Lofemenol (Pills)	42	5	<b>47</b>
Depo-Provera (Shot)	966	133	<b>1,099</b>
Implanon (Implant)	76	172	<b>248</b>
IUD (Intrauterine Device)	2	9	<b>11</b>

## THANK YOU!!

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It is difficult to fully measure the impact that Canadian Friends of HAS has made on the people in our service area, and particularly the programs targeting women and children. While this report highlights several important statistics from 2017, this is only a portion of the story. Seeing the people who are directly impacted by the support of the Canadian Friends annual financial support, and knowing how their lives will be impacted for years to come is the real meaning behind the numbers. Thank you for making this possible through your ongoing support, and for continuing to be a partner with HAS!