

In January this year, I was very privilege to join “Project Light” on its second overseas community involvement project in Khek Noi, Thailand.

“Project Light” was started by a group of nurses from different hospitals and facilities, united because of their heart for the poor and needy. They decided to use their nursing knowledge and experience to bless those less fortunate than themselves. So for the second year running, “Project Light” team partnered with RADION International, a Singaporean NGO based in Thailand, to go into remote villages in Northern/Central Thailand to run mobile clinics and conduct home visitations for villages that could not possibly afford the kind of medical care we take for granted in Singapore.



This was my first medical mission trip and as I am not medically trained, I was quite nervous about joining a group of nurses to conduct health screenings or even do health

education training for students! However, the team of 6 nurses made me feel completely at ease from the very first planning meeting. I truly enjoyed conducting “triage” for the mobile clinics; drawing posters for our health education session at the village school in Huay Nam Khao; and even performing skits and science experiments to engage the children about hygiene practices and the evils of substance abuse.

During that trip, it was really a joy to watch the nurses actively engage the children and elderly we visited. I will never forget the time where we visited the home an elderly lady who had difficulty walking and suffered from asthma. She spoke about how she used to visit the RADION compound to meet her friends and banter with the staff there, but unfortunately is unable to go there anymore because her children live very far away and no one is able to drive her there.



At that moment, Madeleine, the leader of the trip, whispered to me, “This lady doesn’t need medication! She just needs some T.L.C. [tender, loving, care]!!” And to the surprise of the old lady and everyone else, Madeleine stood up and said, “Aunty, your smile is so beautiful! Can I give you a hug?” This sweet gesture stunned everyone present and everyone had tears in their eyes. The elderly lady’s face was transformed by her huge

grin and she said laughing joyously, "You are like a daughter to me! Please come and visit again!"

During this trip I learnt that sometimes the greatest gifts we can give others is our time and our love. Through many experiences, I saw the team go beyond the call of their duty as nurses to reach out to children and adults with sincere care and concern. When we visited the hut of a bedridden old lady who's children had abandoned her, the "Project Light" team leaped into action. They helped the old lady sit up to drink juice; they used their torchlights to check her for bedsores, because the hut had no electricity; they cleaned her and changed her clothes and sheets; and finally they crushed Panadol in juice for her to take for her fever. They were meticulous and professional, but most of all, they were loving and attentive without a single thought for themselves and did not shy away from her because of her smell or hygiene.



Through this, I believe the team from "Project Light" do literally and figuratively do shine their light in dark places and bring hope to those who need it. I feel so blessed to know and befriend these selfless and caring individuals from "Project Light" during the trip. We've even had several "Project Light" reunions since the



trip. I would highly recommend anyone, medically trained or not, to join "Project Light" and make a real difference to the lives of poor and needy children and elderly in Thailand. And when you least expect it, your life will surely be changed to!

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