

Hello, and thank you for your interest in the **Health and Spirit Medical Clinic (Grupo Medico Salud y Espiritu)**. Our goal is to provide access to free, basic dental services to the people of the impoverished Colonias of Progreso and Magisterio in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

**Background:**

Compassionet Impact Development Canada (CIDC) is a registered Canadian Charity working with local partners on the margins of Puerto Vallarta, including Grupo Medico Salud y Espiritu. Pastor Mario Santillan of La Cosecha (The Harvest) Church in Colonia Progreso identified a need to offer free dental care to families who cannot afford anything beyond their daily needs for food and shelter. Oral health is generally neglected in these marginalized neighbourhoods, often a result of poor nutrition and the absence of preventative dental care. Almost every visit to a dentist is for an extraction and with no hope for repair, implants or prostheses. Pastor Mario asked for our help and offered space for the clinic in the La Cosecha Community Centre currently under construction. CIDC accepted the challenge.



*A typical home in the neighbourhood.*



*Life in the neighbourhood around the Derksen Clinic.*

**Building Hope with a Clinic**

Saskatchewan, Canada native Darryl Derksen took on the role of planning and equipping the clinic, recruiting volunteers to work there, and facilitating fundraising to keep the clinic functional. The dental suite is modern and well placed to provide the basic care needed in the community. As a result, over 500 patients have received treatment between its opening in November 2017 to summer 2019.



*Visiting dentist Dr. Bernie Olson assisted by Dr. Harold Gretzinger and Dental Assistant Debbie Olson with Nurse Carmen.*

After Darryl's passing in June 2019 the clinic at La Cosecha is dedicated in his honour as the **Derksen Clinic**.

Canadian and U.S. dentists and hygienists, doctors and nurses are volunteering to come and work, making their vacations with purpose count. The Clinic is currently open two days a week during the winter season. Local Mexican doctors and dentists volunteer their time to make sure care is available weekly during the summer months when visiting volunteers have gone North.



*Dr. Jahkov Arguello volunteers at the clinic every Friday.*



*Dr. Harold Gretzinger lives in Vallarta for several months each year and is part of the Derksen Clinic leadership team.*

### **Special Needs Dentistry – The Olson Fund**

From time to time a patient needs more care than is usually provided at the Clinic, especially for expensive orthodontics or prostheses. Having a good smile is essential when growing up or seeking employment. The Olson Fund sponsors the expenses of one or two orthodontic patients each year as well as paying for prostheses for many patients.

In addition to the dental Clinic, La Cosecha houses a medical clinic focusing on health and wellness with special emphasis on maternal and baby health. CIDC also runs various other programs for women and children in the same busy community centre.



*Children come for more than dental care; a Saturday morning English class followed by lunch for hungry students.*

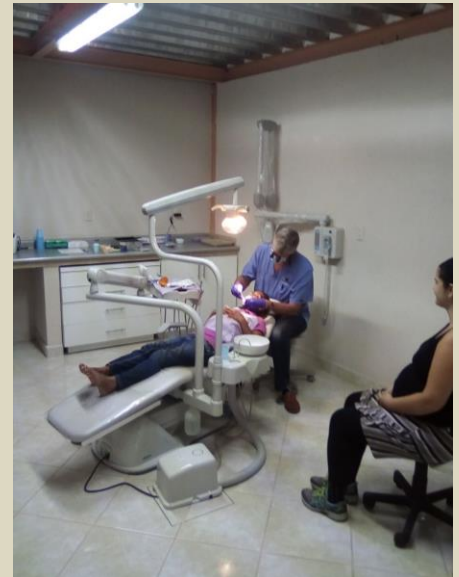


## How to Get Involved

### Volunteer Opportunities

If you are a dentist or doctor, consider volunteering at the Clinic for a half-day or full day per week while you are in Puerto Vallarta

1. **Dentists** – The work in our clinic is limited to examinations, taking periapical or bitewing xrays, routine extractions, restorations, cleanings, charting, and fluoride treatments. The clinic does not do: any crown and bridge work, dental implants, deeply impacted teeth near important anatomical structures, periodontal surgery, complete or partial dentures, pathology, or endodontics. Each dentist must have a current license in some jurisdiction in the USA or Canada. Please email a copy of the license to Dr. Gretzinger ([hgretz@hotmail.ca](mailto:hgretz@hotmail.ca)).
2. **Dental Assistants** – Must be familiar with sterile technique, tray set-up, autoclaving, suctioning and retracting, cleaning and maintaining instruments, re-stocking supplies, administering Fluoride treatments, and taking radiographs.
3. **Dental Hygienists** – Scaling and root planing of teeth. Ultra sonic cleaning of teeth using a Woodpecker U/S cleaner, polishing teeth with rubber cup and pumice, taking radiographs, and administering Fluoride treatments.
4. **Spanish Interpreters** – Greeting patients, helping them fill out medical history forms, obtaining a short history of the presenting complaint, phoning patients on a short list for patients who cancel at the last minute, relaying post-op instructions to the patients, dispensing pain killers and antibiotics on the order of the Dentist. Reviewing a list of Spanish dental terms will help with the interpretations prior to the first day (we will supply this).



## Fundraising Opportunities

- Make a monthly pledge of \$25.00, \$50.00 or \$100.00 to support the ongoing expenses of the clinic for dental and medical supplies, part-time staff and facility costs.
- Host a fundraising event in your own community.
- Make a donation to the Olson Fund for special needs dentistry.
- Donate office equipment and supplies. Please contact us directly for more information.

CIDC will issue tax receipts to Canadian donors. Make your donation payable to Compassionet Impact Development Canada and direct your donation to the Derksen Clinic.

For US donors, please contact us for information on how to receive a tax benefit.



*The Derksen Clinic at La Cosecha. Fully equipped and ready for patients every Friday and on Wednesdays during the winter season.*

## Contact Us

To Volunteer: *Harold Gretzinger* [hgretz@hotmail.com](mailto:hgretz@hotmail.com)

To Promote & Spread the Word: *Ginelle Pidwerbesky* [gpidwerbesky@hotmail.com](mailto:gpidwerbesky@hotmail.com)

To Donate:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/compassionet-impact-development-canada/campaign/free-dental-clinic-in-progresso/>

[or mail cheques to: CIDC, 6417 Dog Lake Road, GORHAM, Ontario P7G0E1](#)

On LinkedIn:

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/health-and-spirit-medical-clinic>

On Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/pvmedicaldentalclinic/>

<https://www.facebook.com/CompassionetImpactDevelopmentCanada/>

Compassionet Impact Development Canada – Building better lives with the poor and disadvantaged in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. <http://compassionetimpact.ca/>



*Sharing a moment... Pastor Mario Santillan and Dr Jahkov Arguello.*



*A very full waiting room*



*A Derksen Clinic patient filling out paperwork.*



*Dr. Bernie Olson and Dental Assistant Debbie Olson.*