



CHILDREN OF CHINA PEDIATRICS FOUNDATION  
*Transforming Lives through Medical Missions*

## COVID Response Report 2020-21

### **Summary:**

2020 presented CCPF with many challenging situations but also many silver linings. This past year, the Foundation's commitment to care for the children remained at the forefront of our efforts. Despite the odds of working in China, we are pleased to report our accomplishments and the impact of our endeavors, thanks to your generous support.

1. Challenges
2. Impact and assessment
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### **1. Challenges:**

Our main challenge during this grant period was the impact of Covid on Chinese hospitals and the global shutdown on international travel. Not being able to travel to China with our American medical team in April and November 2020 for surgical and rehabilitation trips posed challenging scenarios, especially for the children who were scheduled for timely surgery. In addition, we were unable to invite our medical and rehabilitative Fellows from China to New York for their month-long training program on international best practices. Being a small and nimble organization, CCPF was able to adapt to the challenges presented by the virus and re-orient our work rather than cancel it. We were in a unique position to be able to pivot quickly by drawing on the organization's many resources and established network in China and in the U.S. to perform our work in spite of the pandemic.

This network has flourished over many years, as international collaboration through philanthropy and volunteerism has always been a CCPF cornerstone. Even as challenges and tensions mounted with the U.S. – China trade war and the pandemic, CCPF and all of our American and Chinese volunteers were steadfast in their resolve to help the disabled and under-served children in our care with their medical needs.

### **2. Impact and Assessment:**

The following are the steps taken throughout 2020 to assess the situation on the ground in China, plan accordingly and move forward with a plan of action that could include some of the pre-Covid deliverables. Your grant played an integral part in turning limitations into possibilities and challenges into opportunities.

## Spring-Summer 2020

We remained in regular contact with our colleagues on the ground in China. Namely, CCPF's China Director Dr. Hong Haiyang, together with CCPF China Medical Director Dr. David Roye, who now lives in China full-time, communicated throughout the pandemic with our partner orphanages and hospitals in China regarding the welfare of the children.

As collaboration evolved into live video conferencing, we quickly realized the versatility of video communication and assessed how we could use this technology to ensure and further CCPF's mission. We were able to use video-conferencing to:

- Follow-up with 40 children who were scheduled for surgeries and/or clinical visits in 2020. Using video chats and arranging for current X-rays to be taken and emailed to our medical team, CCPF was able to identify urgent surgical needs versus those who could wait another six months to a year. Children, for example, with duplicate digits or maxillofacial abnormalities were not in danger with another six-month wait for surgical intervention. While those with severe scoliosis whose lungs were compromised as they grew or had intolerable pain due to congenital orthopedic structural abnormalities needed surgical intervention as soon as possible. A shortlist was made in the summer of 2020, individualized care plans were drafted and preliminary travel arrangements were underway for the children and their caregivers to travel to a hospital.
- Set-up regular video conferences with the rehabilitation therapists and children in the orphanages, together with our Rehabilitation Medicine Director Dr. Heakyung Kim and her team, to resolve pressing rehab issues. The Nanjing orphanage has video capacity and CCPF has an excellent working relationship with the orphanage leadership, where we were planning the first national rehab conference originally scheduled for April 2020. The video conferencing will not replace the actual national conference we are jointly planning with the orphanage but would be a step in keeping the momentum going so children can continue to receive treatment. Furthermore, it was a way for the Nanjing orphanage to remotely disseminate the training we provide to many other orphanages across China.
- Reach out to our volunteer surgeons to see if they could send videos of lectures on topics that would be useful for our Chinese counterparts working in hospitals. Every mission trip includes a day for education/lectures and we wanted to maintain that professional exchange. Two of CCPF's surgeons proposed several webinars and the hospitals will confirm the talks they would like to offer to their medical teams. Schedule TBA.

### **Dr. Brian Coakley** (Mount Sinai Hospital)

- Anorectal malformations
- Hirschsprung's disease
- Congenital GI tract anomalies
- Wilms tumor
- Neuroblastoma

### **Dr. Suzanne Yoder** (Kaiser Permanente, Los Angeles)

- Pediatric Surgical Emergencies
- The Minimally Invasive approach to Neonatal surgery

- Esophageal Atresia and Tracheo-Esophageal Fistula
  - Treatment of Pulmonary Lesions in the Neonate
  - Treatment of Imperforate Anus
- Postpone our program for Fellows who would have come to NYC in the winter and summer 2020. We will resume that program as soon as it is safe for all to travel. In the meantime, we also plan to extend the video conferencing to include the Fellowship program.

### Fall-Winter 2020

As the pandemic began to subside in China by the end of the summer, our partner orphanages and hospitals were able to shift their efforts to non-Covid-related issues and resumed plans for CCPF's work.

### Rehabilitation Medicine:

- Dr. Kim continues to correspond directly with the head therapists on rehab challenges they are facing and will address those issues in up-coming remote sessions.
- To date, two successful webinars were conducted with the Nanjing orphanage physical therapists and caregivers, headed by CCPF Director of Rehabilitation Medicine, Dr. Heakyung Kim. The third in this series will take place in mid-April. 35-40 therapists and caregivers, as well as the orphanage leadership, attend the talks. The impact is exponential, as the talks can now be disseminated to orphanages across China and hundreds of disabled children can benefit from the training. The speakers are CCPF rehabilitation therapists who have worked with the Nanjing orphanage on past mission trips.

**Dr. Heakyung Kim** (Columbia University Medical Center/ New York Presbyterian Hospital)

- Recent Advances in Pediatric Rehabilitation

**Denise Gibbs and Marcin Madej** (Physical Therapists, New York Presbyterian Hospital)

- Best Practices for taking Medical Notes

### Surgery:

- In December 2020, with only one-week advance notice, Jiangsu People's Hospital (JSPH) confirmed CCPF could use an operating room for one day. Eight urgent cases on the shortlist were notified, a medical team was assembled in China along with CCPF volunteer translators, and the emergency mission was underway. Click to watch a video of the mission. <https://vimeo.com/511405890>
- The mission was a success on many levels. First, our patients with the most urgent needs were taken care of. Five had surgery and three had time sensitive check-ups and have been scheduled for further examinations in the coming months. Second, on such short notice, a team of approximately 60 volunteers from the hospital joined in a collaboration that underscores their dedication for the children and the mutual respect among our Chinese and American colleagues.
- Dr. Roye's and JSPH's Dr. Wang performed the surgeries in tandem. Both doctors are seeing the patients for follow-up appointments over the coming months, and are in consultation with each other.

- In October 2020, an exploratory trip to Fuzhou was arranged for Dr. Roye and Dr. Hong Haiyang, who met with the leadership at three hospitals to explore future collaborations. All three hospitals are excellent facilities and have opened up many new possibilities for CCPF's work. Currently, the plan is to send a mission team in November 2021 to Fuzhou and partner with the Women and Children's Welfare Institute (pending travel safety conditions.) We will treat disabled children in need of surgery and/or rehabilitation.

#### Administration updates:

- Even more efficient fiscal management has been implemented
- A new bi-lingual website was launched in May 2020
- Meetings with a strategic focus on providing the best care for the children under Covid circumstances were held frequently
- We remained in contact with our supporters and provided updates about the children and CCPF's work via e-newsletters every 2-3 months

### **3. Evaluation and Lessons Learned:**

- We had previously explored the benefit of having full-time staff in China to establish year-long representation with medical centers of excellence for pediatric surgery. This year, we were able to pilot this plan with CCPF long-time team member, Claire Jin, who lives in China. A trained surgical nurse, Ms. Jin now handles all aspects of the remote screenings with the surgery patients, coordinates all logistics for their travel to the hospital and supervises follow-up appointments.
- The challenges we faced of not being able to physically travel to China opened up other possibilities of working with remote platforms, with new partners in China, and we are now considering the following different mission trip models that will work simultaneously and complement each other.
  - ❖ Continue with our 1-day missions throughout the year with our local team in China
  - ❖ Plan mission trips with a much smaller U.S. medical team and a larger Chinese team for certain specializations where Chinese surgeons and hospitals have high level skills and facilities, such as urology
  - ❖ Organize larger teams from the U.S. for missions focused on more complex cases
- We learned that remote platforms are extremely effective. For example, X-rays can easily be taken in local hospitals close to where the patients live and sent digitally to our medical team members in Beijing, Shenzhen and New York to provide input and make decisions in tandem. Our patients old enough to use a smartphone are able to communicate directly with CCPF as needed and we can keep close contact with them on a number of health matters. CCPF webinars have the potential to reach exponentially more medical professionals in China working with disabled children and we will continue to offer them in conjunction with our Chinese colleagues' needs.

- We learned how to be “present” in China year-long, with a virtual/in-person hybrid model, rather than only being present during the mission trips. The benefits to this are clear: the children receive more comprehensive care and our relationships with the hospitals and orphanages can continue to grow on a full-time/real-time basis, our professional medical relationships are flourishing and will be reinforced with periodic mission trips.

#### **4. Plans for 2021**

- CCPF continues to monitor the children who had surgery in December with follow-up check-ups and frequent video calls in between check-up appointments.
- Pending safe travel conditions and regulations in China, arrangements for our next surgical and rehab mission trip is being tentatively planned for November in Fuzhou, in collaboration with the Women’s and Children Welfare Institute.
- Webinars on pressing rehab issues are being planned and will be offered throughout the coming months, with the goal of including our partners in Fuzhou. Spring programs include:

##### **Magdalena Oledzka and Frances Baratta-Ziska**

(Physical Therapists, Hospital for Special Surgery, NY)

- Treatment strategies for patients with cognitive delay.

**Lorene Janowski** (Occupational Therapist, Hospital for Special Surgery, NY)

- Sensory dysfunction

- Conduct a feasibility study to digitize years of CCPF medical charts, as we leverage remote platforms to provide care for the children year-round.
- Explore the possibility of expanding our reach to rural areas in China where CCPF has not yet worked.