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September 09, 2008

Media Release No. 27-2008

U.S. NAVY MEDICAL PERSONNEL TREAT OVER 3,500 IN POHNPEI

During the week of August 18-23, a visiting team of 26 military professionals from the United States Naval Hospital Ship USNS Mercy treated 3,567 patients in Pohnpei. This remarkable number represents over ten percent of the main island's total population. These patients received primary medical care, optometry, dental, pharmacy and physical therapy services during the clinics. Mercy dental professionals performed a total of 247 tooth extractions, 127 of these on adults and 120 of them on children. Mercy optical professionals treated 903 patients and distributed 759 pair of prescription reading glasses and 345 pair of sunglasses. Mercy pharmacists saw 2,414 patients and filled 4,673 prescriptions. Patients who were screened and found to be in need of more serious health treatment (such as medical, surgical or orthodontic procedures) were referred to the Pohnpei Department of Health Services for treatment.

In addition to the health care services delivered, two biotechnicians from the Mercy team also repaired the following medical equipment at the Pohnpei State Hospital: one blood bank refrigerator, one blood unit collector, one x-ray machine, two pulse oxymeters, four dental curing light units, one dental chair, four portable dental units, one dental air compressor and one calposcope (used for cervical checkups). They also diagnosed malfunctions and recommended parts to be ordered to fix the hospital's embalming machine, dialysis machine and three additional dental curing light units. The two technicians also provided on-the-job maintenance training to Pohnpei Hospital staff maintenance and personnel who work with these machines.

Officials from the Pohnpei State Governor's Office, Pohnpei Department of Health Services, Pohnpei Department of Education, together with Traditional Leaders and Municipal Government Officials from Kitti, Kolonia, Madolenihmw, Nett, Sokehs and U helped plan and execute the week's activities. Also instrumental in the success of the Mercy community outreach clinics in Pohnpei were volunteer translators and public health educators from the Pohnpei Department of Health Services and the Micronesian Red Cross Society. At each location Mercy military personnel worked side-by-side in close partnership with their Pohnpeian counterparts in the screening, administration, treatment, and referral of patients.



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