

What difference a day makes! The arrival of the medical team from Colorado has made all the difference. They are top notch and very well organized and have a surgeon with them. There are many fewer critical patients now but still plenty of nasty wounds and fractures. Some of the foreign medical teams operating in Port au Prince have been able to take more patients. Tonight, team members rushed a little baby with suspected meningitis, suffering non-stop seizures to an Israeli team. Jim and Barb continued to work hard alongside our newcomers and the integration of our two teams has been seamless. All of the medical folks are doing a fantastic job and it is inspiring to see. The dozens of Haitian volunteers helping us in every way you can imagine - security, translation, water treatment and distribution, etc. have been amazing. They are completely dedicated and we had to start forcing them to take breaks. Although many of them have lost homes and family members, they arrive early every day, work until dark or later and have made it clear they are doing this only because they want to help their community. All this great help has freed me up quite a bit and I'm really happy to be less involved in medical stuff and can focus on coordination, translating and special projects. At our morning meeting, one of the docs who has a lot of training in disasters suggested we get going to improve sanitation in the compound. There are hundreds of people camped out under sheets and tarps in the compound and with no toilet facilities, diarrheal diseases are starting to spread. A nice guy named John from Pennsylvania and I organized a Haitian team to construct a latrine at the far end of the field. Later in the day, I assembled all the kids in the compound and put on a little concert. The kids banged on metal lids, plastic bottles and tubs and shook a pair of maracas someone found in the house while I sang songs about tooth brushing, hygiene and nutrition. Then we talked about the new latrine before we led them all single file on a tour of our lovely sanitary facility. They were so excited, you would think they were going to Disney World. They were instructed to spread the word to their families. That was just the sort of thing I needed after yesterday's massive stress-out. I haven't heard anything about Reginette yet and the hospital I took her too is too far away to visit. Gas is just too precious now.

From Port au Prince

Mark Coughlin