

July 15, 2022 8:00

Visit to the public hospital in Sayaxche, Guatemala.



Visitors: Lesbia, Richard, Mike, Margaret Ann, Susan, Baird, Moises, Christina

We arrived at the hospital for our 8:00 appointment and approach the guarded, closed gate. We were allowed to pass through, feeling rather guilty about jumping in front of the many individuals waiting patiently outside the gate for service.

The medical social worker greeted us and provided the one-hour tour. We began in the emergency area; it was very quiet thankfully. All staff were wearing masks. The area was stocked with supplies. There is a defibrillator on a cart next to stretcher. (Two bays and a separate room for children, that can be used as overflow for adults.) There were sheets on the beds. The staff was very welcoming and friendly. There was one procedure being performed.



We progressed to the supply room. Lots of boxes of supplies (lots of IV fluids), a manager, and her strong helper. There is a chart on the wall with the inventory, and a red, yellow, green system that prioritizes expiration dates – where supplies listed in red are to be used first. The chart is update monthly. We did not observe an area for cleaning and sterilizing supplies and equipment.

We then went to the X-Ray area. We do not think they have a MRI or CT scanner. They have ultrasound. A separate ortho room.

They have a morgue that is also the autopsy room.

The laundry room was busy. Very large washers and dryers in full use...sheets, blankets towels, uniforms, surgery linens.

We then toured the maternity area. There were several women with their newborn babies in the hallway on beds who appeared to be waiting 5 hours post-delivery before being discharged. One woman was starting to get dressed. Women who come in to labor are required to take a shower in large walk-in shower before going to labor area. Delivery room is

near the operating rooms - two operating rooms and recovery area. There is one large room where the laboring women wait to move to the delivery room. It appeared to be a supportive atmosphere, but no privacy. No fathers were present. There is a poster on the wall concerning the “Golden Hour” – steps regarding how to save a mother’s life when bleeding too much during delivery. There were posters on walls that guide decision making related to labor progress. As midwife, Christina works in this hospital when her patients deliver here.

The nutrition/food supply room is located beside the kitchen. It has supplies and charts about eating well. They provide food for the kitchen.



The kitchen is large and well-lit with many windows. The counter tops are wooden. It is well stocked with cooking appliances. There was an empty tray cart outside on the porch. The kitchen provides food for patient and staff are served in an adjoining dining room area. The kitchen has a three-sink system for washing pans and cooking utensils. No dishwasher was seen for cleaning patient dishes.

We greeted the custodians in the hall and thanked them for their work. The hospital appeared very neat, organized, and clean.

We moved to the administrative area. There is a statistician office. Data was posted on the wall regarding mortality, births, and many other topics. There is an accounting office, the social worker's office, and the director of the hospital office. The director came out to meet us and wanted to take several pictures. He exchanged numbers with Mike for future connection. Mike also obtained the social worker's contact information. The director was very welcoming and encouraged us to come again and please let him know in advance to coordinate a meeting.

We passed by the pharmacy and small lab where blood counts are done. It appears that cultures and tissue samples are sent out.



At the back entrance there are dressing rooms and lockers where the staff enter the hospital and must change from their street clothes as they come into the hospital, and then change back as they exit, leaving their scrubs to be laundered in the hospital.

There is a supply room which has pens, paper, folders, etc.

We needed to depart so we did not see the patient area. There was a separate building on the grounds labeled COVID unit. There were multiple buildings on the campus.

A helicopter can be made available for transporting patients to facilities where services and expertise is not available in this hospital.

The hospital uses visiting nurses.



There were stacks of bags of concrete near the back dock and evidence of repair/upgrading work being done in the facility.

When we exited, we saw the intake/admissions area. There are chairs lined up outside under cover, with social distancing observed, where patients wait to be served on a first come basis.



The hospital support services (ER, Lab, radiology, pharmacy, labor and delivery, OR, kitchen, Central supply and laundry, business office and administration) resembled an old hospital at which Margaret Ann served as Director of Nursing in 1972.