

*Saving lives around the world*

# **Insulin for Life**

Australia and Global

## **Philippines Report**

**May 2015**

<sup>36</sup> **I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.**

<sup>39</sup> **When did we see you sick, or in prison, and came unto you?**

<sup>40</sup> **And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as you have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done *it* unto me.**

Matthew 25: 36-40

*The Holy Bible: King James Version.*

**“The impact *Insulin for Life* has had in saving lives around the world is remarkable. The program has been blessed by God”**

- Neil Donelan - Insulin for Life Australia & Global.

## The Philippines Trip and Cebu Camp report 13<sup>th</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015

Members from Insulin for Life Australia & Global embarked on a trip to help save the lives of poor Type 1 children and adult diabetes patients in the Philippines.

The IFL team included Neil Donelan IFL Board Member, IDF Taskforce committee member who was the co-ordinator on this trip. Other members were Ms Juvy Holasca Registered Nurse, Ms Mery (Chaty) Harris Registered Nurse, Ms Ayumi Hikita Registered Nurse and a Type 1 Diabetes sufferer, and Ms Jacqueline Francis volunteer, all who are residing in Australia at this time.

### Manila

In February 2015 through a mutual Filipino friend residing in Ballarat, Australia, a request was made by Ms Jehan Baladad Administrator of the **BJMP** (Bureau of Jails Management and Penology) of Calamba City Prison in Manila for IFL to come and meet with the Prison Governor, Secretary, and Prison staff to see if IFL can support and help in-mates suffering from Type 1 diabetes, who have no access or family support to obtain the necessary resources to control their diabetes. On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015 our team visited the prison.

Justice Superintendent Ms Filipinas T Fulgencio met with the team and a power point presentation was given to 25 medical and prison staff on the IFL program and ways that IFL could assist the in-mates.

There are currently 900 in-mates serving time. Two hundred are suffering from Tuberculosis and are isolated in the infirmary, as TB is contagious there is a 6 months recovery period needed in isolation. There is some financial support from the government to help these patients to recover, but there is no support from the government for diabetes sufferers.

It is believed that there are a number of in-mates suffering from diabetes, but only 3 of them are receiving insulin support, and this is from their families. These are women in-mates who are using Lantus insulin; this prison has male and female in-mates, housed in separate sections of the prison.

Superintendent Fulgencio told us no testing has been done to obtain the exact numbers of in-mates suffering diabetes and there is no funding available from the government to conduct such testing. I said to Superintendent Fulgencio until the numbers who have Type 1 diabetes can be established, IFL could not send any aid to the prison.

We agreed that a diabetes testing program should be held to determine the number. My suggestion was that we contact the IDF (International Diabetes Federation) member organisation of the Philippines which is based in Manila to see if that could provide the appropriate diabetes doctors, nurses and educators to carry out the testing.

A follow up will be done. Once contact has been made then I will report to Superintendent Fulgencio to see if testing can be arranged. We left 3 Diabetes Aid kits with the Prison.

There are 49 prisons situated in the Manila region, with an estimated 72,000 in-mates for the whole population of the Philippines, overcrowding and Tuberculosis is rife.

## Bacolod

After leaving Manila we travelled to the city of Bacolod on the western border of one of the Negros islands. Bacolod is the main capital of the Sugar Cane growing area of the Philippines, with a city population of around 1.5 million people.

We stayed at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital in Bacolod; they have reasonable cost accommodation apartments, so we stayed for 3 days

A diabetes presentation Glucose Blood testing program and lecture was held at the Negros Occidental Public hospital a few kilometres from the SDA hospital from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The program was introduced by Mr Anton Monfort medical administrator and diabetes educator; the speakers were Dr Luz Maapni, and I on behalf of IFL. 45 people attended and were tested. One young man who had never been tested for diabetes, recorded a very high reading, a second test was applied a couple of hours later which still showed a high reading so we referred him to his doctor to have a full diabetes check to see if he actually has the start of diabetes. We left on going diabetes supplies with Dr Maapni, she will be in touch to see if the IFL program can be implemented and the hospital can work with IFL.

Later at the SDA hospital a meeting was held with the Hospital Pastor and Chaplain Pedro D. London and the head of the hospital Hector Gayas. They are also interested in the IFL program to help poor diabetes sufferers, and are hoping that a combined program with Negros Occidental Public hospital can work together. Next year they would like us to return so a full diabetes testing program can be held.

Hector Gayas also mentioned that there is believed to be over **12 million** people suffering from diabetes in the Philippines. The full cost to the community and government health budget in the Philippines is unmeasurable.

## Cebu Camp

The JDF – Cebu Chapter Sunshine Camp as part of the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center of Cebu, headed up by Dr Marian Denopol, the camp was sponsored by the Philippines Department of Health with the assistance of Amri Garcia President of Sweet Alert and her team of ladies from Sweet Alert, with resources supplied by IFL.

The camp was held at Danao City, one and half hour's drive north of Cebu City, the same situation as last year's camp. It was held from the 20<sup>th</sup> May until the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015

In attendance were 18 children ranging from 6 -26 years, 10 parents and coordinators, 20 Facilitators doctors, nurses, diabetes educators, 6 foreigners. 5 Children from Dumaguete and their parents attended with Dr Clarita and Ma Ciela Alatan as well.

This year's camp was different from last year. Last year the children were kept indoors listening to lectures most of the time and actives were limited. IFL and its representatives were asked to comment on last year's camp. Recommendations made that more actives were more practical than children listening to diabetes lectures. The comments were taken on board, and changes were made. There were more activities outside and everybody enjoyed them.

The children were divided into 4 groups according to their age, and 4 monitors were assigned to each group. It was the responsibility of the monitors who were made up of nurses, doctors, trained diabetes educators, and medical students to teach the parents and the children how to look after themselves and their child in the treatment of diabetes.

Blood testing was done as often as every two hours during the day, and every 4 hours during the night for those with unstable blood sugars. Again Insulin for Life Australia donated many of the supplies, test strips, glucose meters, lancets, lancet devices, pen needles, syringes, cool packs and glucose tablets to cover the needs of the camp and some beyond that.

The parents were also instructed in the value and importance of nutrition for their child's needs to give them a healthy sustainable life without complications in their life with diabetes. Training sessions on the treatment, prevention and awareness of diabetes were conducted

A host of activities such as dancing, exercising, swimming, T-shirt painting, walking, drawing were conducted. Age appropriate games were conducted for the campers to test their knowledge about what has been discussed. Survival techniques were taught, in the case of an emergency what should the child or the parent do. On one occasion Ayumi dressed in her native Japanese Kimono and taught all at the camp how to do origami.

Medtronic Australia also provided training aides for the camp, we took with us "Lenny the Lion" doll, masks, colouring books, and pencil sets. The colouring books consisted of stories and activities that relate to diabetes, which teach children in fun way about diabetes. These books were in English so this helped the children to practice their English

The Pharmaceutical Company, Abbott conducted many of the activities, many thanks to Agnes, Edu and Junil, from Abbott who taught team building through games. Friendships and social networking for all ages proved to be good relationship building skills. The younger children who had not socialised with older children or had anything to do with foreigners such as those from Japan, Australia warmed to our friendship, and bonds of trust we forged during those days.

Some of the parents were treated to some special attention from Juvy, Ayumi, Chaty, and Jackie. They were given a makeover with nail painting, makeup, and hair styling. Activities that in the own environment they could not afford.

In one particular activity everybody at the camp was asked to write an answer to this question "If there was one thing I could change in my life what would it be.....?" This turned out to be an interesting exercise as it invoked an emotional and heart felt response from some campers both young and old. They had to read out before the whole assembly their answer; some eyes were not left dry.

I interviewed one of the young boys in front of some of the parents, Kirby a 12 year from Dumaguete. I asked him how he felt when he first arrived at the camp. He said he was nervous and scared because he did not know anybody and had no friends, but after the camp he had made a new friend a boy named Migs the same age from Cebu. He was glad he had the opportunity to attend the camp. He now has a different view in the way he sees himself and diabetes.

These camps are important; they change lives forever, in the way that a child views themselves and the world.

A special thank you to Leyden Florido, from the Association of Diabetes Nurse Educators of the Philippines, and the organisations Sunshine camp, and Rainbow camp. Leyden led out through the whole time, a lady who has a special gifted talent in organising and bringing people together, a talent that gives hope, joy, and love to a person, May God bless Leyden.

The camp for next year is proposed to be held at the same camp site El Salvador on the 11th to 13th May 2016.

### **Dipolog**

After the Cebu camp, we were given a bit of time before the next program in Dumaguete and considering the request and need Juvy, Ayumi, Jackie and I decided to take an unplanned travel to Dipolog. This journey to Dipolog was by Sea Ferry a 10 hour overnight trip. Which turned out to be quite an adventure and more lives saved.

We arrived on the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015. Armi Garcia's driver from the Ariana Hotel picked us up from the port.

At 1 pm that day we attended a presentation, lecture, and testing program organised by Armi Garcia on behalf of Sweet Alert Cebu in the Dipolog Community Centre, around 100 people came to this program.

94 people had their blood glucose tested. A young boy named Johnny aged 8 years old had a reading so high that it could not be measured on the meter. One of the doctors and Juvy explained the urgency to the mother of the need for her child to receive medical treatment; fortunately some insulin was available at the meeting and was administered to Johnny. Advice was given to his mother that she should take her child to her diabetes doctor and full diagnosis and education be done.

Another person, a man by the name of Edgar, aged 48 years, also showed a very high reading he was also administered insulin. Edgar was suffering from an infection in the right foot and was advised to visit his doctor as soon as possible.

Armi Garcia stressed the importance of running a day camp in Dipolog in 2016 and asked IFL to come back in May next year to help with the project.

The Governor of the Province gave a closing speech at the end of the meeting and thanked Armi and IFL for their interest in coming to Dipolog to help save the lives of those in need.

And is looking forward to seeing us again next year when a more intensive program and day camp can be held.

### **Dumaguete**

After leaving Dipolog we travelled by Sea Ferry to Dumaguete a 4 hour boat journey.

We were met by Dr Clarita Cadiz from the Negros Oriental Hospital on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2015

At 9.00 am of the next morning we attended a meeting with 300 diabetes patients at the hospital and a presentation was given by me, Juvy, and Chaty spoke of the seriousness for management and education of diabetes, many of the patients asked questions. We were able to explain how the IFL program originated and how we wanted to be able support the local community and save lives on an ongoing basis.

Dr Cadiz is keen to have some of the children in her care to be accepted onto the IDF Life for a Child program. I spoke to her about this last year. She has given me the profiles of 19 children who she thinks would qualify for the LFAC program. I have brought them back with me and will pass them onto Dr Graham Ogle of the LFAC program soon.

After this meeting, at 1.00 pm another meeting was convened with Dr Cadiz and a group of older volunteer patients led by Mr Nagar Garcia, Boycee Lim, Manuel, Arnold Torres, and Junil who wanted to have some say, and giving back to the program that they had been benefitting from in Dumaguete. I explained to them the dynamics of how the IFL program was working and the legal implications involved in running such a program not only in the Philippines but in other countries, which they had not fully understood in the past.

I then shifted the conversation to the potential of running the first children's diabetes camp in Dumaguete and enlisted their interest and help to procure such a camp which they enthusiastically embraced and have offered their assistance to help to achieve in May 2016.

A planning procedure has been adopted, with the intent of going ahead with the camp in 2016. This group of men have agreed to support Dr Cadiz in the project.

It is proposed that a camp be held in Dumaguete from 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Although some funding would be raised locally, International funding support would also be needed to help with the success of the camp.

In the next 2 days suitable sites were viewed with the aim of achieving a suitable site for the camp. I did stress to Dr Cadiz and to her assistant Ms Ciela Alatan that it is imperative that they try to secure a site and a budget for this camp as soon as possible. It is expected that the camp cater for 75 people.

Once they know a costing for the camp they should inform me.

## **Cebu**

We returned to Cebu on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Juvy arranged for Ayumi and I to visit her family and stay with them at a Resort for 2 nights. While Chaty and Jackie visited Manila.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> May we moved to the Center Suites Hotel in central Cebu.

A meeting had been arranged by Juvy's mother at 4 pm that day with the owner of the hotel Dr Evan Mendoza. Dr Mendoza has Type 1 diabetes himself, and has a number of poor patients in his care. We discussed the possibility of having these patients join an IFL program.

I explained to him that it is not IFL's intention to have any other programs running in Cebu other than the one that is connected to the Vicente Sotto Hospital with Dr Marian Denopol and Sweet Alert. Dr Mendoza knows Dr Denopol I asked him to contact her to see if she is

willing to accept his patients onto her program. I also asked him if he would be interested in participating in the Cebu Camp next year as a volunteer doctor, and he said he would, if work commitments permit.

We left Cebu for Australia on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015.

### **Future Camps**

IFL has succeeded in establishing good life saving programs in the Philippines. We want to build on these programs in the next 5 years. One way of doing this is to encourage diabetes camps.

At this moment we are planning to have 4 camps in May 2016 which will coincide with each other.

Dumaguete, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> May

Dipolog, 7<sup>th</sup> May (day Camp)

Davao 8<sup>th</sup> May (day camp)

Cebu 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> May

### **Summary**

Like most developing countries, Diabetes in the Philippines is out of control, lives are lost every day.

### **Acknowledgements**

A big thank you, to Armi Garcia and her team of volunteers from Sweet Alert. Dr Marian Denopol, Dr Clarita Cadiz, and Ms Ciela Alatan

To the IFL Team Juvy, Ayumi, Chaty, and Jackie who volunteered their time and effort to travel to the Philippines at mostly their own expense, and for carrying 22 kgs of diabetes aid in their personal baggage for the programs in the different cities of the Philippines

Jerry Gore British mountaineer, adventurer extraordinaire, a Type 1 diabetes sufferer ,and Charles Toomey for funds raised to help sponsor these camps and save lives.

Insulin for Life Australia & Global also helped sponsor the payment for incidentals and the shipment of supplies sent for the camp.

IDAF of Japan who in the past, and to all those in the past who have given up their time, money, and energy to support diabetes and save lives in the Philippines, and other countries.

Thank you to Medtronic Australia for providing training aides for the camp

Kind regards

*Neil Donelan*

Neil Donelan      **Insulin for Life Australia & Global**



**Neil Donelan** is an Australian who lives in Wendouree, Victoria, Australia. Neil is a founding Board Member of Insulin for Life Australia, which was established in 1999. He is the Manager of collection and distribution of Diabetes Aid throughout the world for IFL Australia, as well as the Shipping Coordinator for all emergency diabetes aid relief work throughout the world for the International Diabetes Federation (IDF). He is a serving Member of the IDF Insulin Taskforce Committee whose job it is among other things to monitor the cost of insulin and access availability for developing countries. He also has served as the volunteer coordinator of Diabetes Children's camps in Ecuador, South America since 2007. Neil's professional background is from the Fire and General Insurance industry in Australia.



**Ayumi Hikita** Is Japanese. She has been a Type 1 diabetes sufferer, from the age of 9 years. Ayumi has been in Australia for 16 months, lives in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. The reason she wanted to come abroad was to try something new in order to gain experience. At present she works as an assistant nurse at an aged care facility and has been there for half a year. In Japan, she worked as a Nurse for 6 years. Ayumi have been supporting patients and their families as a diabetes educator. As a sufferer of Type 1 diabetes, it has given her useful guidance to help others less fortunate than herself. She has always wanted to do volunteer work before coming to Australia. Ayumi hopes that she can set an example for her patients, and improve her knowledge through talking with and working with as many as people possible.



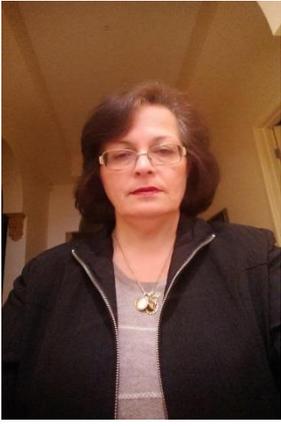
### **Juvy Holasca**

Juvy is a Filipino, born and grew up in Cebu City. She came to Australia to study Nursing in 2011. She is now living and working as a Registered Nurse in Ballarat, Australia. She enjoys volunteering with Insulin For Life since 2012. Through her and her mother, they were able to collaborate with Sweet Alert Inc. and IFL. This link started the working and helping relationship with IFL and Sweet Alert, which in turn help save lives of indigenous Cebuanos.



### **Mery Elgen Harris**

My name is Mery Elgen Harris, also known as "CHATY". I am a Filipina nurse from Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines. I am now residing in Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. I am happy to help, serve and share to others through ministry works like helping the Orphanages, feeding the street children and helping diabetes people. I am one of the active volunteer with Insulin For Life Australia since 2013. I attended the International Diabetic Federation in Melbourne last December 2013. Through them, we opened a program in Dumaguete City and it is very successful and progressive.



### **Jacqueline Francis**

Jacqueline is from Lebanon, Arrived in Australia in 1979 worked in the retail, hospitality, and service Industries for thirty years, up until 2013. For the last 2 years she been semi-retired, but is now looking to expand her knowledge and interest in the Medical Health, and Humanitarian fields, such as Pathology, and diabetes, using her skills and talents as a volunteer medical health worker. This will be her first time assisting Insulin for Life Australia and Global in helping to save the lives of children and adults, from a disadvantaged socio-economic country which is experiencing hardship in coping with diabetes, as is happening in the Philippines. She brings to the team, enthusiasm, and a willingness to make a difference in the lives of diabetes sufferers, not only in the Philippines but also in other regions of the world.