

Tidwell Fund for Cobán Hospital, Guatemala



Guatemala is a country located in Central America with a population of 18,004,675. Most of the population consists of indigenous groups, which speak 28 different dialects. The EXTREME poverty rate in the indigenous population is 49%, with an average household income of \$200 a month, which equals to \$7 a day.

The Guatemalan health system does not provide insurance and it is divided into public and private hospitals. Public hospitals are severely underfunded.

I did my medical training to become a doctor for 4 years at the Cobán Hospital in Guatemala, which is a public hospital with mainly an indigenous population. First hand I saw the many deficits of the public hospital. It isn't equipped with many important diagnostic tools, but most importantly life-saving diagnostic imaging is absent. There are no CT, MRI or endoscopy equipment.

Patients who need these diagnostic and therapeutic tools are transferred to a private hospital. The average cost of one of these imaging studies is an average of \$150. The family of the patient, who just had a traumatic car accident, is demanded to pay the price in that instant for the imaging and ambulance to transfer the patient to a private hospital. Once finished with the study they need to pay the ambulance transport back to the public hospital with the imaging results to decide the correct management of the patient or the patient will die.

Sadly, with a monthly household income of \$200 and an average of 4 children per household, these studies do not get paid for and the patients are just put on palliative care in the Intensive Care Unit. These are preventable deaths, which I witnessed first hand.

My concern is so great that I have decided to create a fund to help pay for diagnostic imaging and procedures for patients whom the hospital social worker indicates qualify for funding. The price of \$150 can cover the patient's necessary imaging study and give doctors the information needed to correctly manage the patient's treatment and save their lives. I would appreciate if you would consider partnering with me in these efforts.

If you would like more information you can contact me:
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