Bridge of Life-DaVita Medical Missions Announces Guatemala Mission to Establish Acute Dialysis Clinic

DENVER, Jul 27, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Bridge of Life - DaVita Medical Missions today announced an August 2011 mission to Guatemala to establish an acute care dialysis facility in San Felipe. The charity will open a clinic for those with acute kidney failure in the National Hospital, Pedro de Bethancourt.

"In too many developing countries, like Guatemala, kidney failure leads to death because dialysis is unavailable," said Bridge of Life Executive Director Lori Vaclavik. "Bridge of Life goes to these countries with equipment, expertise and education to establish dialysis clinics and save lives."

A team of volunteers that includes a physician, nurses, biomedical technicians and patient care technicians will travel to Guatemala in August. The team will help set up two dialysis stations and train local staff in providing dialysis care. Bridge of Life previously established the first pediatric dialysis unit in Guatemala in partnership with the Foundation for Children with Kidney Disease. This center has reduced the mortality rate due to acute uremic syndrome from 80 percent to zero.

"There are very few dialysis clinics in Guatemala," said Javier Castro, director of special projects at the hospital. "This mission really will provide a bridge of life for many patients who would die without dialysis."

Bridge of Life recruits volunteers with medical and kidney care expertise for its missions, using volunteers from all walks of life to support operations. Deanna Bradley, a registered nurse, served on a previous mission team that established a dialysis clinic in Ecuador.

"Volunteering with Bridge of Life was the most amazing experience of my career. The gratitude of the families, patients and medical staff in the hospital we served was overwhelming," Bradley said.

In recent years Bridge of Life missions have included establishing clinics and providing supplies and training in Cameroon, Ecuador, India and the Philippines. Upcoming missions are planned to Jamaica, Peru and several African nations.

About Bridge of Life - DaVita Medical Missions:

Bridge of Life - DaVita Medical Missions, an independent not-for-profit charitable organization, serves those disproportionately affected by chronic kidney disease in developing countries. The organization was established in 2006.

SOURCE: DaVita

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