

Mission Success

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On Monday February 25, 2008, 20 Soldiers carried out a mission. These Soldiers came from all walks of life, all parts of America with different morals and ethical beliefs. On that day they all believed in one cause, one mission, and one vision. They started their day with the birds chirping and the sun rising. They started the day off believing they were going to make a difference in someone's life. There was a Medical Mission in store, a Medical Mission that would show the United States wasn't just in the country for war. Hope and life were given out like medicine at a pharmacy; in fact a pharmacy on wheels drove up to a clinic at a site in Bulayj, Iraq and gave out treatments, screenings, and a dose of hope. I was blessed with the opportunity of being on the mission that day. That day I saw how one doctor with a vision could make miracles happen for people who haven't seen any miracles recently. That doctor is CPT David Adam of 4th Squadron, 6th U.S. Cavalry and he is a man that provides a vision and requires people alike to see that vision and make it come true.

We drove Humvees on a rocky road through the city of Tal-Afar, Iraq with medical supplies that brought smiles. Amongst us were eight Soldiers from 3/3/1 Military Transition Team (MiTT), SPC Eric Rutherford and SPC Deck from 3rd ACR, and ten Soldiers from 4-6 Air Cavalry Squadron. We went through several check points that were controlled by Iraqi Police, and for some of us this was our first time on a convoy,

Stores in Bulayj.



so the worst was to be expected. We monitored our scenery and communicated non-stop through headphones and microphones, providing each other with information. We drove for an hour and a half until we reached Bulayj. While going through the city of Bulayj, there wasn't much to see. There were small mud houses and small stores that were built from the ground up. There were a few children standing on the side of the road smiling and waving at the convoy as we drove by. The children liked when convoys came through the city because the U.S. Soldiers would throw candy and food from the vehicles.

All of us wanted to see the clinic that CPT Adam religiously talked about. The medical personnel and I were ecstatic about the Med Cap mission.

Inside of the Clinic.



This mission was the biggest Medical Civil Actions Program (Med Cap) that 4-6 ACS has organized, and a big turn out was anticipated.

Inside the clinic gates we started unloading the Humvee's to set up and prepare for the Iraqi people. CPT Adam switched out his Kevlar for a Seattle Seahawks baseball cap,



which is his doctor's cap, and the rest of the medics went their separate ways into their own private offices to set up and get ready to see patients. SFC Alesia Wilkerson of 4-6 ACS, began to set up a make shift pharmacy which was positioned conveniently next to the exit. SPC Kevin Malott went in looking for his old office. SPC Benjamin Eades shadowed SPC Malott's examples as a future leading medic, only moving a little quicker showing that he too could lead.

SFC Wilkerson setting up Pharmacy.

CSM Michael Clowser and SPC Schuler Winters (4-6 ACS) also set up a station outside the clinic with toys and shoes for the children. They were there with a bag of goodies to ensure every Iraqi child left the clinic with more than they came with. SPC Deck of 3rd ACR paired up with CPT Ashlie Christian (4-6 ACS), in a private room, where they were to see mostly women and children.

The 3/3/1 MiTT team was awesome; they were one of the key elements that provided 4-6 ACS the necessary means to make the convoy and the mission happen. They

provided vehicles, security, and the expertise for 4-6 ACS to learn from. MAJ Montgomery and his team immediately secured the scene upon arrival and moved everyone into the building; he also set up the clinic with security that provided a search of each patient, as well as a search of each individual that entered the clinic. They were the experienced eyes and ears that were needed to make this Med Cap Mission a success. SPC Ruthurford and I were there as journalists so we took hundreds of pictures and retained as much information as possible, allowing us to write a story telling about the extraordinary day. We moved from room to room, position to position, in order to capture what I saw as a miracle in the making. As time moved along, CPT Adam began to move quickly from patient to patient trying to decide what medical problems could be fixed with his hands and medication and what patients he couldn't fix, but could assist. He wrote referrals to patients that needed extra care and wrote prescriptions non-stop. If this man had a prescription that could cure his patients' ills he would have gave it away in a heartbeat. He spoke to the patients as though they could understand English. He treated the most critical patients as a priority. He dealt with children as if they were his own, often showing pictures of his family to the parents making them more comfortable and less nervous about this man they had never seen. He gave the same care to his patients that he would give to a fellow Soldier. SPC Malott moved vigorously, while working with an Iraqi Medic and a translator who tried to keep up. He explained everything to his patients when trying to figure out their problems and what treatments were necessary for them. In the room next door to SPC Malott was SPC Eades, a Medic some people would think is timid, but is very observant and diligent. SPC Eades worked alone on that day and this is probably the most he's ever been on his own, but no one would have known that except for him. He was a brilliant Soldier when it came to diagnosing his patients, giving them the best medical advice only a professional would know. He recommended medicine to treat his patients' illnesses and hope that it would assist them in living a better life.

We also had participation from the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police and the Iraqi Medics. They helped each medic with the patients and also gave out the wheelchairs that an American company provided. The wheel chairs were a hot commodity and they went as fast as freeze pops in the summer time. The chairs were made out of plastic lawn chairs and the wheels were from bicycle tires. Another hot commodity was Tylenol and Motrin. Most of the patients were suffering from headaches,



CPT Adam with a patient.

earaches and/or stomach aches, and the best thing for treating aches and pains is those medications.



SPC Winters drinks Chai Tea

CPT Adam enjoyed a few laughs from the patients he saw that day. One patient jokingly said to him, “If you give me Viagra, I will give you more wives.” That became the joke for the day. It put a smile on CPT Adam’s face and the patient also made himself laugh. While we were visiting the Bulayj community, they treated us to hot tea; it was served in small glasses with a teaspoon of sugar and a small spoon on a saucer. Everyone enjoyed this native tea, which reminded me of Chai Tea and the gesture made everyone feel welcome. Their hospitality was in no way questionable.

Throughout the day patients with different types of problems came in and out of the clinic, but the children had the most interesting cases. SPC Eades believes that one of the reasons the Iraqi children have so many problems is due to the lack of health care, vaccinations and prenatal care for expectant mothers. There was a young girl that was 1 year old and suffered from Febrile Seizures which caused her body and her brain to overheat and her eyes were crossed as a result. She had more problems which could not be corrected with one visit to a Doctor. SPC Eades being the observant medic he is, said “I thought it was cool that we could give her a consult, I felt like we could do something to a certain extent.” When the medics of 4-6 ACS feel like they have helped it places a smile on their faces and gives them something to look forward to on future Med Cap Missions.

1yr old has Febrile Seizures.



This mission was important for us and the people of Iraq. The idea was to teach the Iraqi Doctors and Medics how to medically treat their Iraqi patients. These types of missions will assist in the restoration process in Iraq allowing their doctors to treat their patients and provide the best medical treatment and medication. There were three Iraqi Medics and one Doctor who were offered the opportunity to visit FOB Sykes and learn under CPT Adam’s guidance. For the Medics the greatest reward has come from knowing that 4th Squadron, 6th U.S Cavalry has made a difference in the lives of these Iraqi people.



4-6 ACS,
3/3/1 Mitt,
3rd ACR and
Iraq Medics and Doctors