



GlobalMed Brings Virtual Care to Ghana

As the world leader in virtual care solutions, GlobalMed is active in every corner of the world. Our mission is to transform healthcare globally by bringing quality virtual care to the underserved – which is why our telemedicine solutions treat patients in over 55 countries.

Recently a GlobalMed contractor transformed a village in Kumasi, Ghana with just one telemedicine station. Krystylle Richardson is an author, a business consultant, an inspirational speaker, recording artist and radio host. Her Soaring with Eagles show airs every Tuesday morning on the Voice America Empowerment Channel Internet Radio in 11 countries.

She's also an ordained minister who has completed almost a dozen missions in places like Senegal, Jamaica, Nigeria, Kenya, Barbados, Bahamas and Ghana. "For our service missions, we would clear land or we would lay concrete foundations for buildings," she said.

When she joined the GlobalMed team, Richardson saw an opportunity to partner her humanitarian work with the company vision of transforming healthcare globally.

"I got started with GlobalMed as their registrar auditor," she said, explaining that her background in Industrial Engineering has led her to work with General Motors, Ford, Pepsi, Motorola Life

Sciences and numerous biotech and medical device companies. "Sometimes I go into companies and say, 'This is a great company I want to work with' because of what they're doing – and GlobalMed was one of those companies."

Mission Meets Medicine

Given that GlobalMed's solutions are used in countries around the world, a conversation with CEO Joel Barthelemy inevitably turned to Richardson's upcoming Ghana mission. At the time she was looking to do a medical mission, something her medical device clients sometimes assisted with by sharing supplies.

Intrigued, Barthelemy asked her for details. "Joel said, 'It would be great if you could bring one of our units' – and I said yes, it would be great!"

The staff decided that she would take a GlobalMed Transportable Exam Station (TES), which is designed to provide healthcare delivery to patients in remote locations. The rugged rolling case is compact and able to withstand rough travel and conditions. In addition to a sophisticated military-grade PC, the station offers an integrated speaker and microphone and an integrated 1080p camera for video conferencing.

Setting the Stage for Change

Richardson's first step was training on the mobile telemedicine station. The TES unit is HIPAA and HITRUST compliant with secure data transfer capabilities. To meet HIPAA requirements, Richardson documented the providers and team who would have access to the machine on the unit's pop-up screen.



GlobalMed TES Unit

By this point, the mission was working with a sizeable medical team, including “a doctor and a gynecologist here in the United States and doctors and a gynecologist in Kumasi.” One of the doctors brought four nurses to offer services beyond the station, such as fecal samples, cheek swabs and clinical tests.

Next the mission worked with a pastor who created flyers for the two clinic locations: one at a school and another in a more rural location. Because the TES has a battery life of 8 hours and connects via WIFI, 3G, 4G or wired connections, Richardson confirmed the electricity and WIFI capabilities of the clinic locations. After that, the mission clinics were ready to operate.

High Demand for Care

Richardson and her missionaries weren't sure how many patients to expect. When she asked, the answer was, “It could be 50 people, 100 or even 200.” They knew the weather would influence the attendance. While many Kumasi citizens have cars,

the residents who needed free healthcare the most often didn't have transportation. Most of the patients would arrive on foot.

Over 300 people showed up for the clinics. “The first day we had the clinic at the school location, it was only supposed to be a one-day clinic,” Richardson recalled. “But there were so many people, we wound up extending it for several days. We saw over 100 people that first day.”

Long lines of patients waited outside the clinic. At one point, the building power went out, which meant some people didn't get seen. “So, we came back the next day and they were still waiting along with a new set of people,” Richardson said.

The TES unit was used for more than 1,000 individual exams, including eyes, throat, ears, and other examinations. The Kumasi nurses arranged the clinics in efficient workflows, with separate stations for vitals, ultrasounds, ECGs and ear wax flushes. Richardson and the team stayed up all night to make sure every patient was seen.

“That second day we went from 6 p.m. until after 6 a.m.,” she said. “We couldn't turn them away when they'd waited so long and walked such a long way. We wound up cancelling some other planned events so we could see as many as possible.”

Memorable Healthcare Encounters

The pressure was on to deliver medical care to every waiting patient. Around 2:30 a.m. that night, the TES unit light went out. “The patients had been sitting there all night. I could tell from their faces they were worried.” Richardson told everyone to take a break and get some water. “Everyone was staring at me when I returned. So thank goodness I was able to fix it. When the light came back on, there were cheers and smiles and hallelujahs. Even though it was 3 a.m., everyone was waving flags and singing songs.” The clinic continued until dawn.

Richardson met several memorable patients. One was a 96-year-old woman who walked to the clinic every day for information about different issues. “She kept thanking me and thanking me.”

Another was the community's security guard, who patrolled the grounds at night. He first arrived for

his appointment with a bow and arrow; after being sent away, he came back with a machete. Later he returned without a weapon and received his exam. “Apparently the security guard sometimes doesn’t listen to people, but he listened to everything I told him to do because he really wanted to be examined,” Richardson said. “It was kind of funny that he first seemed to be a scary guy and ended up being a nice person. Everyone clapped and cheered when his exam was finished. It was a night I will never forget.”

Leaving a Legacy of Positive Change

The team provided a variety of informational care, such as counseling patients with high blood pressure to make diet and lifestyle changes. Other patients were educated on basic care for specific issues, such as flushing their ears with warm water. The doctors and nurses committed to doing follow-ups with people who needed additional help.

The TES visuals were especially popular with the patients. “The windows were open and people were trying to see the screen. So if we were examining a child, I’d have the parents come over to view the station. That was an Oh wow moment for them to see the magnified image on the screen and see what’s in someone’s throat or ear, or what someone’s eyeball looks like up close. Some of the children would snicker if they saw a big glob of earwax blocking their ear drum.”

The team also provided inspiration and encouragement. Two sisters told Richardson that they wanted to be doctors when they were older; the team let them examine the TES station and view each other’s screens. They also gave them latex gloves and face masks to take as keepsakes.

The patients did a video and a group photo holding signs that said, “Thank you, GlobalMed!”

Creating a Tradition of Care

Richardson said the Kumasi community begged her team to return next year on another mission – preferably with more TES units. Other GlobalMed employees have expressed an interest in returning with her. Her dream is that GlobalMed teams up with other medical and biotech companies, doctors and dentists for a bigger impact in underserved communities. Together, she believes, they would be able to formulate new approaches to transforming global care: “To help people on an ongoing basis, you must think of things differently based on what they have access to.”

For now, Richardson said she’s thankful for GlobalMed’s transformational dedication. “I’m honored to have played a part of bringing the GlobalMed vision to life – providing quality, timely care for all.”

For more information on the Transportable Exam Station or other GlobalMed devices, call +1 480.922.0044 or visit GlobalMed.com/Solutions.



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