



The view from *This Little Row in the Lord's Vineyard*

The Dohn Family ~ SAMS Missionaries in Health Ministries



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Michael, Elizabeth & Anita

Physician-Patient Partnerships in Health Care

I broke my right wrist while in Cincinnati last month for a daughter's graduation. Not much to say ~ dark environment and steps.

We were almost certain that it was broken. However, we opted to just splint and ice the wrist in Cincinnati for our three remaining days there. I got an X-ray after returning to San Pedro to diagnose the type of fracture. I have opted to continue using the splint instead of a cast.

Practicing medicine has had some challenges, however. I have been asking patients to weigh themselves while I supervise to make sure the weight is accurate. Using my stethoscope may require that my patient hold the bell on his or her own chest while I listen. "OK, move it a little lower now."

Patient visits generate papers that have to go into the chart along with laboratory reports. I hold the papers in place while the patient pushes down on the paper punch. Depending upon the number of papers, I may ask the patient to clip everything into his or her chart.

Physician-patient partnership here involves patient education and joint decision making. And, for the time being, a little extra help for the doctor.

Keep praying, Anita



The "venetian blind" X-ray viewing technique allows us to look at contiguous "slices" of Anita's wrist X-ray (Sort of like a CT scan? No not really). Shifting the X-ray slightly up or down lets us view different slices.

The best situation would be to use an X-ray view box, but the Clinic does not have one. When the electricity is out, the view box would not help.

The best alternative is the window at the Clinic that has a wall outside about five feet away that has a flat surface with glossy white paint. When the sun shines on that wall, we can get a good X-ray reading at that window. Actually, with the bright tropical sunlight, almost any window works whether or not there is a white wall.

By the way, buying the wrist splint in Cincinnati from one of the national chain pharmacies cost about US\$ 20 and the X-ray here cost about US\$ 14. We did not have to pay for an X-ray reading: we read it; Dr. Luisa and Dr. Daisy at the Clinic read it; the entire community health team read it; and our daughter Elizabeth read it (she's holding it in the picture above). The opinions were unanimous: it's broken.

We don't know what it would have cost if we had gone to an emergency room in Cincinnati. We are certain that our alternative was less expensive.

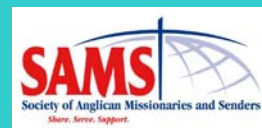
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