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This paper is compiled of excerpts of emails that I sent out to family, friends and colleagues while I was in South Africa.

"Today was my first day at the clinic. The hospital is like any other hospital from the 1940's. The knowledge and education was right up there though. The doc I was with was awesome and really good at teaching. I spent the morning on the OB floor and the afternoon confused about where the doctor went. Overall it was a pretty good experience.

Today we started a new rotation at an orphanage. The kids are great and really just want attention. They certainly aren't shy and apparently know nothing about stranger danger...I suppose that's what happens when you have so many people in and out of your life. There are about 1/3 of the kids that are on Aids treatment. Most are doing really well now that the drugs have become more available. These kids don't lack medication or food but they are starved for attention. The orphanage staff does the best they can but even then the goal is just to keep everyone happy and from crying, there just aren't enough staff workers to go around.

I also spent some time doing some of my osteopathic manipulation on a couple of the kids. There were two youngsters who haven't begun to crawl and are pretty far behind on their milestones. The nurse asked me to do some physiotherapy on them so I did a little OM. They both seemed to respond very well, one of the little guys even allowed me to hold him and put his feet on the ground for a bit.

The little 11mo man had no urge to use his little legs. I worked with him all last week and by Friday he was balancing on my leg with his feet on the ground trying to bounce a little bit. Apparently two weeks before he wasn't able to hold himself in a seated position. The little girl just came to the orphanage a month ago, at 9mo of age. She was undernourished and under cared for; her little legs didn't have the strength to move herself even though she really wanted to. By the end of the week I was able to get her to pull herself up to a seated position by using my fingers and even balance for a few seconds before toppling over in one direction or another!! I got them both set up with a young volunteer from Germany who will be at the orphanage for the next few months...

Can you believe it is already my third week here in South Africa!! I finished up last week at the orphanage with a bang...got peed on and spit up on all in one day!

I spent my last week at King Edward's hospital in the pediatric resuscitation unit (PRU), which is basically a pediatric ER. Lots of dehydrated babies secondary to gastroenteritis...for all you lay people, vomiting and diarrhea! Not pleasant. I saw some pretty unique things throughout the week...Stevens Johnson syndrome (a pretty rare drug reaction or reaction to a virus), chorea (uncontrollable movements like an arm flailing in one direction or the other without the patients control) in a patient with rheumatic fever, congestive heart failure in a 7 year old possibly secondary to rheumatic fever in the past...

This week I am on to hospice care in Chatsworth, a suburb of Durban. Today we spent the day making home visits to people with HIV and end stage cancer. Hospice care in South Africa is a little different than in the US. Here they begin treatment earlier in the disease stage, the belief being is that if you get to know a person before their disease progresses to end stage you will be able to care for them at a much greater level later when they are about to cross over. Therefore not everyone we visited was bound to their beds, there were multiple people up and about such as a man with a brain tumor for the last 6 years, a mentally challenged woman with HIV, and a

woman with stomach cancer who was babysitting 3 small children when we got there.

So I have finished up my program in Durban. I ended my last week with hospice care. I have never been in a situation where the doctors, nurses and staff are so comfortable with death. In my experience in the states everyone likes to scoot past the issue and most doctors feel the need to give each person that extra two days of life even if the quality is low.

I am home now and my reflections on my experience in South Africa are something that I will never forget. It was a truly amazing two months of my life. “