CASE REPORT

HUMANITARIAN RESCUE MEDICAL ACTION FOR PATIENT WITH ADVANCED LOWER EXTREMITY LYPHEDEMA

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“For the afflicted by it, the disease brought both physical and mental suffering”
- L. Barinka, 1984 (cited by Co-Editor Leo Clodius, MD, in his review)

ABSTRACT

No clear data exists regarding the initiating process of medical care delivery in cases of humanitarian rescue for advanced and debilitating patient conditions. We report on the delivery of care from a hospital located in a rural area in Southern Taiwan to a desperate patient from a country across the world in Lima, Peru. The patient is a 45-year old woman with unilateral severe, progressive primary lymphedema of 26 years who was scheduled to undergo a high femoral amputation for infections, lymphatic leak, inability to ambulate, and symptomatic cardiomegaly. All arrangements for care, including dental restoration, were made by our hospital in collaboration with the government of Peru. Upon multi-departmental consultation, an 8-hour Charles procedure was performed removing 47kg of lymphedematous thigh and leg tissue. Eleven months postoperatively the patient is healed and ambulating without assistance. Her weight dropped from 120 to 73 kg. This case of humanitarian action demonstrates intense collaboration and coordination between two governments with dialogue, diplomatic success, a lymphedema surgical feat, and ultimately a successful outcome for the patient.