Joshua Imperio, MD

Eisenhower Medical Center Internist Joshua Imperio,MD is looking forward to returning to the Philippines in July 2010. It will be his third medical mission with his church's program, Operation Hope."We plan to go to the province of Batangas and visit four barrios," shares Dr. Imperio."My wife and children usually join me, so it is something that we can experience together."

In 2004, Dr. Imperio traveled to Baguio City."A group of us — medical doctors and nurses — were there for about a week. We taught the NEW START program, an acronym for nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight, temperance, air, rest and trusting God," explains Dr. Imperio."We offer preventive information and give lectures to the indigenous people. If we dispense medication, the people just stop taking it when they run out. They simply don't have the money to purchase the drugs. So, we talk about preventive information and the benefits of good nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight."

In 2006,Dr. Imperio and a similar team went to Davao City."We traveled to two outlying barrios and saw 2,000 patients during our stay.During the day, we had a team of surgeons, pediatricians, internists and dentists seeing patients and performing minor surgery. I saw 30 to 40 patients a day mainly with hypertension, diabetes, kidney and thyroid problems," says Imperio."What I liked most was giving the lectures.We did the NEW START program there too, and I gave the 'air' lecture. We had a spirometer [a device that measures the volume of air inhaled and exhaled], screened for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and offered patients help quitting smoking."

Dr. Imperio, who attended medical school at the University of the Philippines, finds his repeated sojourns to the Philippines a bit cathartic."It's like going back to the home country," reflects Imperio."It is nice to give back to the community where I trained, and to help them."

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