

Kang Gou Village Clinic - Dr. Wu Yingping

Through this project, our partner, the Amity Foundation, is reaching out with a loving and helping hand to those in need, while simultaneously fulfilling another of its goals, that of making the presence and the caring of Chinese Christians for all people more widely known in Chinese society by working with people of many different backgrounds to bring concrete expressions of love that touch the deepest needs of others in tangible ways that make a difference in their lives. Through our help in the building of the village clinics and through our provision of some needed medicines, we American Baptists have also become a part of this ministry of love-in-action. Here is the story of Kang Gou Village and of village doctor, Dr. Wu (Wu Yingping)

Kang Gou Village is located in the mountainous region of He Chuan Township in the Yuan Zhou District toward the southern end of the Ningxia Autonomous Region of China. The mountain roads into this area are bouncy, narrow, winding dirt and gravel roads. You can see the roads, the mountains and the valleys in the pictures below. The village consists of more than 160 families with a total population of 1730 people, about 380 of whom are children. Approximately half of the children are between the ages of five and sixteen, while the other half are four and under.



Bouncy, narrow, winding dirt and gravel roads take us through the mountains toward



Kang Gou Village, with breathtaking views of the mountains, valleys and terraces along the way

Dr. Wu Yingping, a villager and farmer, graduated from Amity's one-and-a-half-year village doctor training program in 2000. Since 2000, in addition to his farming, he has joined Dr. He, who has served as village doctor since 1980. The Chinese government wants each village to have two village doctors. Kang Gou Village is more fortunate than many as it now meets that goal. Since the villagers live scattered over a wide area with a radius of about 6 km (approximately 3¾ miles) up and down the nearby hills and valleys, it is especially helpful to have two doctors. That way one doctor can easily take his medical bag and go out to visit an ill villager at home as needed, while the other doctor remains in the clinic to see patients who come in for medical care. In the past, they only had a very small one room clinic in which to see their patients, which was not very convenient for doctor or patient.

With \$1000 in One Great Hour of Sharing funds contributed by American Baptists and sent through the Amity Foundation added to funds from the two doctors' farm work along with help from relatives and friends, Dr. Wu and Dr. He have been able to build a small clinic according to the specifications of Amity and the requirements



of the Provincial Health Bureau.¹ The clinic has three rooms—a reception room, an examination and treatment room, and another room with a bed for patients who might need to stay at the clinic overnight.



Dr. Wu and Dr. He stand below the Kang Gou Amity Village Clinic and County Health Bureau signs.



Judy interviews Dr. Wu at his desk.



The examination table



Supplies of medicines

Seventy percent of the Kang Gou villagers belong to the Hui Minority (one of 56 different ethnic groups that are recognized as vital parts of the population in China today). The Hui Minority people have Muslim roots and considered themselves ethnically Muslim. The remaining 30% are Han Chinese (the ethnic group that we usually think of as being Chinese).



Relatively poor mountain farmers, the villagers' main crops include corn, wheat, and benne (a type of sesame grown in this area and used to make edible cooking oil). The plots of land allotted to each person or to each family are relatively small and farming is generally done by hand. Notice how this mother and her teenage son are fertilizing their small plot of corn one stalk at a time by hand. Some families may also raise two or three goats or sheep or one or two head of cattle.



A Kang Gou village farm house nestled against a rising hillside across the road from the new village clinic



A cornfield next to the Kang Gou Village Clinic, with village homes in the distance.



Kang Gou Village extends down the hill, across the ravine, up the distant hillsides, and around the other sides of these hills.



The number of patients Dr. Wu and Dr. He see each week depends a lot on the season. More become ill and seek the doctor's advice in the winter and spring than in the summer and fall. On average, about 50 villagers would come to see the doctor for medical advice and treatment each week. In addition, people from some of the nearby villages also come to these doctors for advice because they trust their medical knowledge and judgment. The main conditions they treat include colds and flu, other respiratory illnesses, digestive problems and arthritis. Drs. Wu and He also provide prenatal care and advice for pregnant women and follow-up the mothers after the birth of the child, providing check-ups for mother and baby.



Dr. Yang (local Amity staff overseeing this project) looks over the medical record books of Drs. Wu and He.

Every year Dr. Wu and Dr. He also provides preventative medical care for their villagers as well, giving appropriate vaccinations for the children and going house to house teaching each family about drinking water safety, personal hygiene, nutrition and disease prevention. Each month they bring vaccines back from the county hospital and health offices and use the following two days to go around to all of the village homes where the vaccines are needed. In addition, they use a blackboard on the outer wall of the clinic to provide additional health related education for all the villagers to read when they come to see the doctor.



Dr. Yang (local Amity staff overseeing this project) explains about the medicines we have offered for use in treating patients who cannot afford to pay for the medicine they need, while a county health official looks on.



Drs Wu and He unpack the medicines we have given.

Many times patients who come to see the doctor cannot pay for the small cost of the medicine they need, let alone any fee for the doctor. In this case, they usually sign some kind of I.O.U. These patients will always try to pay the doctor back gradually and will do their best to clear their debt at harvest time. Nonetheless, there are always some who are so poor that they cannot pay back what they owe and the doctor continues to pay for their treatment out of his own pocket even though the doctor and his family are also quite poor. This is true of Drs Wu and He, as it is of other village doctors as well. To help mitigate this problem and enable village doctors to continue to serving the poorest of the poor in their villages and surrounding areas without totally draining their own resources dry, American Baptists, with the help of the Amity Foundation and the Ningxia Provincial Health and Sanitation Office have started to provide a supply of commonly needed medicines that these village doctors can use when

treating those who cannot afford to pay for their care. ABWM is currently raising White Cross funds to help with this project.

Dr. Wu and Dr. He and other village doctors regularly attend additional training seminars held by the County Health and Sanitation Bureau in Guyuang. These include a one day meeting on the 15th of each month to update village doctors on pertinent health and hygiene information they need to share with their villagers, as well as important vaccination and treatment information relevant to diseases appearing in the area, as well as information about the prevention of T.B. Moreover, they just returned from a three-day seminar on medical regulations that village doctors must comply with and on the appropriate use of various medicines. The previous three day seminar was about liver problems. These periodic seminars help the village doctors to increase their medical knowledge and to serve their villagers better.

In commenting on the impact of the new village clinic, Drs Wu and He indicated that they now have enough space for the storage of the medicines, the doctor's desk and the bed for patients who might need longer treatment to be in separate rooms. The clinic is not only more spacious, but also lighter and more convenient.

Thanks again for your part in this ministry of "love in action" in Kang Gou Village and in nine other villages, also in the southern part of the Ningxia Autonomous Region in China.

¹ ABC International Ministries is interested in helping other similar villages with their medical needs in the same way. The \$1000 reflects what was needed for the construction and provide basic equipment for each clinic in 2004. As costs have been rising, any future clinics built will need \$1400 for construction and basic equipment.