



Executive Summary

Prepared for the Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District
By Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs
2016

From June 2-11, 2015, the Ohio River Medical Mission (ORMM) provided over \$730,000 worth of no-cost medical, dental, vision, and veterinary services to residents of Meigs County, Ohio and the surrounding area. Over two-thousand people and animals received needed services through the U.S. Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program, which provides services to residents of underserved areas across the U.S, free of charge. In return, military reserve units (in this case the 7241st Medical Supply Unit out of Lexington, Kentucky, along with the 24th Medical Detachment from Fort Bragg, North Carolina) are able to gain experience deploying to new sites and providing services under changing conditions.

The ORMM was officially sponsored by the Meigs County Commissioners, and was planned, organized, and implemented by Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District (Buckeye Hills). Hundreds of volunteers and community organizations contributed their time and energy to the event, which drew participants from 83 towns across five different states.

ORMM in Numbers

Number of People Receiving No-Cost Care	1,966
Number of Animals Served	986
Estimated Value of All Services	\$739,357
Patient Satisfaction Rate	99.3%
Number of Volunteers	390
Number of Volunteer Hours	3,357
Value of Volunteer Hours	\$77,467

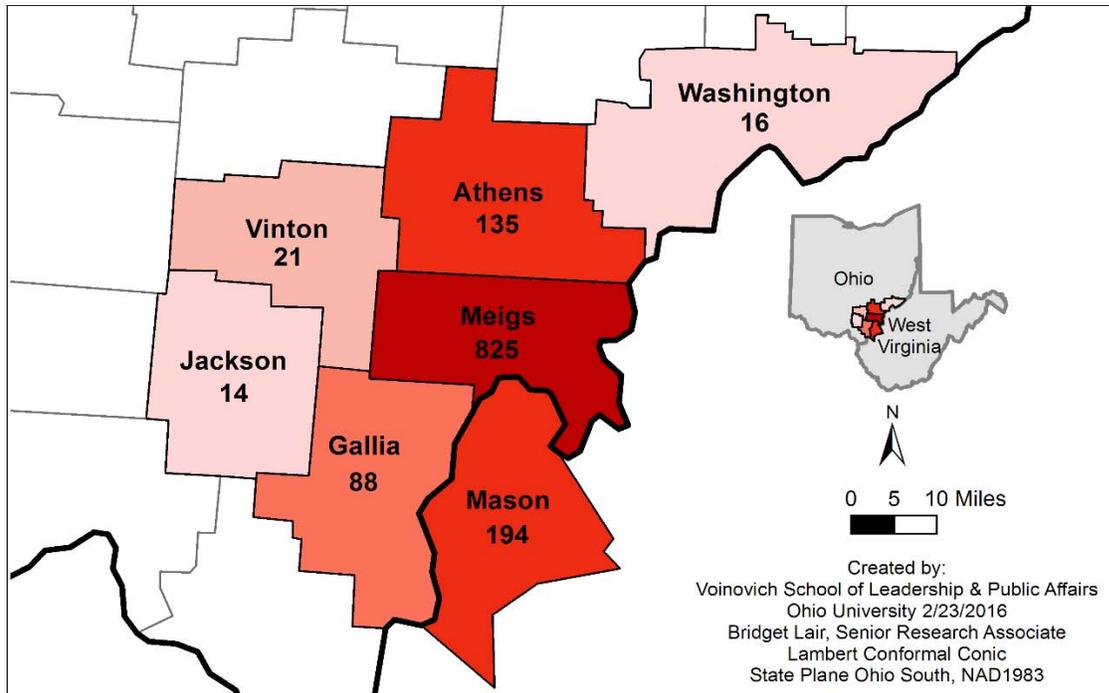
Source: "Final Mission Data," prepared by the U.S. Army Reserves 7241st Medical Support Unit, Army Reserve Medical Command

This document is a summary of a larger report produced by Ohio University. The full report, as well as a companion document that details lessons learned and suggested practices for future IRTs, is available from Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District.

Geographic Area Served

While the mission drew people from five different states (including Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Michigan) ORMM patients primarily came from Meigs, Gallia, and Athens counties in Ohio, and Mason County in West Virginia. Map 1 shows the number of people attending the event from Meigs and surrounding counties.

Map 1. Number of People Attending from Meigs and Surrounding Counties



Source: Ohio River Medical Mission Database

Participant Profile

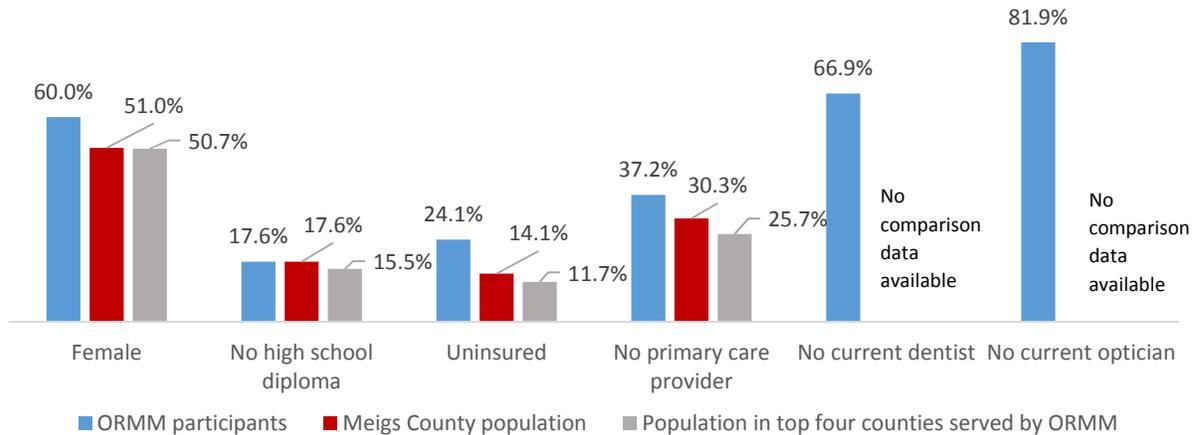
The ORMM drew participants ranging in age from two years to 91 years, with an average age of 44 years. The overwhelming majority of participants (92.7 percent) were white, while less than half of participants (44.5 percent) were married. Most of those coming to the ORMM for services reported that they did not have a current dentist and did not have a current optician. Over a quarter of participants (27.9 percent) reported that they could not afford to eat balanced meals at least sometimes.¹

The majority of participants were insured (75.9 percent) and had a primary care provider (62.8 percent). Event organizers report that many participants said that they had insurance but could not afford co-pays or deductibles, and that their insurance did not include coverage for dental or vision.

¹ Ohio River Medical Mission Database

As the following figure shows, when compared to the general population of Meigs County and to the main area served by the mission, a slightly higher percentage of the people coming to the ORMM for services were female, uninsured, and without a primary care provider.

Figure 1. ORMM Participants Compared to Population of Meigs County and Top Counties Served by ORMM (Athens County, OH; Gallia County, OH; Meigs County, OH; and Mason County, WV)

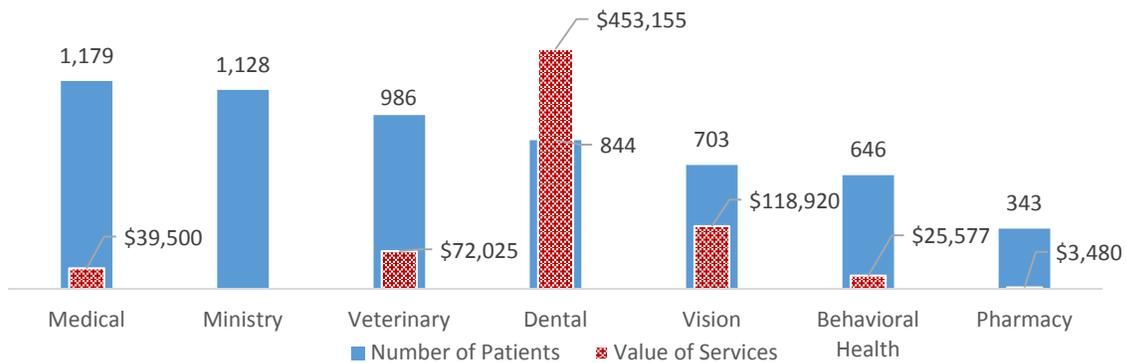


Sources: ORMM database. Comparison data for gender, education, and insurance are taken from the U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014. Information on primary care providers is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, with additional data analysis by CARES. 2011-12.²

Services Provided by Medical Mission

Participants in the medical mission were offered medical, behavioral, vision-related, dental, pharmaceutical, and ministerial services. The ORMM also included a veterinary component, which offered spay and neutering, exams, vaccinations, and other services to almost 1,000 animals. Figure 2 below indicates the number of patients receiving each type of service, as well as the value of those services.

Figure 2. Number of Patients and Value of Services Provided, by Specialty



Source: "Final Mission Data"

Note: No monetary value estimation was provided for ministry services.

² The sample sizes for each category of the ORMM data were the following: percent female n=1,390; percent without high school diploma n=1,397; percent uninsured n=1,356; percent without primary care provider n=1,324; percent without dentist n= 1,342; percent without optician n=1,282.

Impact on Individuals

In many cases, the ORMM provided services to individuals who otherwise would not have been able to obtain them. Other patients with limited incomes might have been able to access care without the ORMM, but would have used up resources that they could use to address other important needs such as housing. Because all the provided services (including fabrication of eyeglasses and filling of prescriptions) were no-cost, the ORMM allowed individuals to save their limited resources for other needs. As Meigs County Commissioner Tim Ihles said, “There were no deductibles, nothing came out of their pockets...and we hope it helped them to be able to do other things in their lives.”

The ORMM also made a concerted effort to improve the social conditions of patients by linking them with supports for which they were eligible. This function was built into the check-out process, which was staffed by professionals from state and local social service agencies.

Impact on the Community

County Commissioner Tim Ihle reported that Meigs County residents viewed the IRT as a continuation of recent efforts to revitalize the community through cleanup days, a new emergency room, a new animal shelter, and other community improvements. In addition, the spaying and neutering provided by the IRT alone is estimated to have prevented litters of 206,000 dogs and 38,686,920 cats.³

Impact on the State

The ORMM broke new ground by being the first IRT held in Appalachian Ohio. According to Karen Fabiano of the Ohio Development Services Agency, the success of the ORMM has made the Governor’s Office of Appalachia eager to see more IRTs in the region: “We’re anxious to try to see if we can get one of the local development districts to start planning and apply for a second one.” Fabiano also noted that by visiting the ORMM as it was occurring, state officials were able to see first-hand the seriousness of the need for services such as dental care and eye care in the region.

There were a lot of people, especially in the dental part, who were able to get services that they were otherwise unable to get [without the IRT]...

I think where we made a big impact was those people out of county or out of state [who did not know] who to contact or where to go to get services...We were able to hook them up with the right county agency in whatever county they lived in.

Christopher Shank,
Meigs County Job and Family
Services

The county [commissioners] have a \$5 million a year budget, and almost \$1 million in benefits went out in the 10-day period.

-Tim Ihle
Meigs County Commissioner

[Visiting the IRT and seeing] what some of the needs are... gives us a clearer perspective on what we might need to do in terms of prioritizing our federal dollars.

-Karen Fabiano,
Ohio Development Services
Agency

³ “Ohio River Medical Mission Serves Thousands”

Community and State Support

The medical mission received substantial support from individuals in the community, from community organizations, and from the State of Ohio. As Bonnie McFarland of Holzer Health System observed, “There was this who group of people who came together for a great cause...and gave their all.”

The following are just some of the many ways in which Meigs County residents, community organizations, state organizations, and others supported the ORMM.

- The Governor’s Office of Appalachia, Sisters Health Foundation, and Buckeye Hills provided funding for the event.
- Farmers Bank in Pomeroy, Ohio offered a line of credit to fill the gap between expenditures and reimbursement. The bank also provided meeting space for planning, and some staff helped at the event as well.
- Churches and volunteer organizations baked cookies and provided food for volunteers and the military.
- Veterans’ organizations, the Boy Scouts, and many other community groups volunteered at the event. Almost 400 volunteers donated 3,357 hours of their time to the mission. The estimated value of their contribution is \$77,467.
- Holzer Health System brought their Wellness Wagon to the event, and staff provided health screenings. Holzer also supplied materials to the dental unit, and arranged for a local dentist to order other needed supplies.
- Ohio University sent students from the College of Health Sciences and Professions, who provided a variety of services, among them nutrition classes.
- Meigs County High School allowed the use of its school facilities for the event, and students helped at the veterinary site and helped set up materials at the medical site.
- Meigs County Job and Family Services, the Southeast Ohio Aging and Disabilities Network, the Area Agency on Aging 7 and 8, and the Ohio Benefit Bank helped connect patients with social services and support.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Area Agency on Aging 7 & 8 · The Bartees · Big Buck Radio · Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley Regional Development District · Civitas Media · The Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development · CPC, Ink Farmers Bank · Gallia-Meigs Community Action · Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action · Holzer Health System · Meigs County Agricultural Society · Meigs Chamber of Commerce · Meigs County Commissioners Meigs County Council on Aging · Meigs Economic Development Office · Meigs County Emergency Management Agency & Emergency Medical Services · Meigs County Health Department · Meigs County Job & Family Services and Jobs Ohio · Meigs Local School District · Meigs County Sheriff’s Office · Meigs and Mason American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts and Auxiliaries · New Era Broadband Ohio Department of Transportation · Ohio Benefit Bank · Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine · Pepsi/Aquafina · Prevent Blindness Ohio · RSVP · The State of Ohio · Sunny 93 Radio Trifecta Productions · WJOS TV · WYVK Radio

Data Sources

Quantitative data were gathered from the following sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, with additional data analysis by CARES. 2011-12, accessed through “Community Commons,” <http://www.communitycommons.org/>

“Final Mission Data” compiled by the 7241st Medical Supply Unit, Lexington, Kentucky

Ohio River Medical Mission Database, compiled by Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, from records created at the mission

“Ohio River Medical Mission Serves Thousands,” document provided by Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District

U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014, accessed through Community Commons

Interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

Bret Allphin, Development Director for Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District

Misty Casto, Executive Director of Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District

Mindy Cayton, Planner, The Ohio Area Agency on Aging 8

Karen Fabiano, Assistant Chief, Community Services Division, Ohio Development Services Agency

Brian Howard, Special Services Manager, Farmers Bank (Pomeroy, Ohio)

Tim Ihle, Meigs County Commissioner

Mary Lewis, Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development

Britney Lindberg, Project Manager/Military Liaison, Delta Regional Authority

Bonnie McFarland, former Director of Community Wellness for Holzer Health System

Colleen Murphy-Smith, Registered Sanitarian with Meigs County Health Department

Christopher Shank, Executive Director of Meigs County Job and Family Services

Gwynn Stewart, Communications Director for Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District

Courtney Thomas, Executive Director, Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (Cumberland, MD)

Caroline Quidort, Regional Development Analyst, Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board (Binghamton, NY)



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