

# Ap Ma Project - Papua New Guinea

## Jesse & Kari Pryor Family

Cholera Update

**Date:** Sat, 4 Dec 2010

Here is the latest news 5:44 pm Saturday or 3 am Saturday your time. We are doing a bit better today as the patient numbers have dropped but unfortunately the people coming in are showing that we have not contained the problem or neighbors down upriver.

Wom has now had their first case. And more are popping up in Laten than before.

Luckily the word has gone out as to how to treat the illness and the speed at which you must receive help. So people are aware and for the most part complying. One of the "faith only" church members baby got sick yesterday and they took the ORS but refused the drip and they were back at night on the drip after an earful from the nurse.

David Mica, Nursing Officer (Equivalent of RN) is here with as a part of the CDC and Mariana, Samban clinic nurse, is working generally with other patients.

Today there was a fairly large axe wound. The Nurses were both in Laten so I sent word and started the clean up. David got there in time to sew it up. I disinfected and "tidied" the clinic and all surfaces.

I am working on typing up a Cholera Treatment guidebook from the information the CDC gave us. Also I am working on public awareness flyers for neighboring villages that haven't got it yet and how to prevent it.

I am hoping to get a flight out late next week as there is a was a death of a Laten girl in Madang and they want to get the body back here and the clinic will need extra supplies so I will jump on the back load of that flight if possible.

I am keeping busy with water container washing and disinfecting etc. So far I feel fine and I feel very content with my decision to come back. They recognize the risk and appreciate the help and it shows. Thank you so much for all your prayers the numbers are down.

Keep praying us through and it will all be over soon. Love to all - Kari

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**Date:** Sun, 5 Dec 2010

Well good news from Samban. No new cases today. 3 doctors from Angoram and Wewak traveled up to Samban to make a check on the situation. Seems to be calming down, but there are still quite a few recovering. But it's a major answer of prayer that there are no new cases in Samban. It has spread to some surrounding villages, but so far that is in check as well. I think the awareness is helping as well. The doctor on the task force is giving daily talks and giving out pamphlets to let people know about what cholera is and how to avoid it.

Jesse

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**Date:** December 4, 2010

Sorry for not getting back to you guys sooner. Last minute decisions have left us scrambling and traveling so here is what has gone on in the last 24 hours. The cholera task force which got sent to the village consisted of one doctor. He was sent with a limited supply and instructions to find out if it was indeed cholera and report back. After being on the ground there in Samban, he confirmed that it was indeed cholera, and there were several people with the early stages. He went through his ORS (oral rehydration salts) on the first day. Someone climbed a tree to get cellphone reception and informed me to come up on the radio in the morning (Thursday). I did and got a list of what he needed. I promptly called the guy in Wewak, who is the provincial head and informed him of the need for meds and the number of cases treated. He started putting the meds together, meanwhile my guys were coming down by canoe and outboard motor to await the meds. Unfortunately we could find no vehicles traveling from Wewak to Angoram by boat. We have some friends who are missionaries with a group called Samaritan Aviation. They operate a float plane for situations just like this. Mark Palm (the pilot) was more than happy to help.

Karie and I had discussed the fact of one of us needed to be in the village to be able to communicate with someone in town, to co-ordinate information, meds, and do whatever possible to assist the doctor with his efforts. Our own nurse, that operates the clinic, is already helping him full time. Since I have been sick with a bad virus myself for over a week, going back to the environment that existed in Samban, was just not safe. We also agreed that to put our kids in that situation was not fair to them. We decided to be the missionaries, they're just along for the ride.

Long story short, Karie got to ride in the float plane. I'm so jealous. She was in Samban by 6 pm that afternoon, after a 25 minute flight from Wewak that landed on the Sepik River right at Angoram. My guys brought the canoe right alongside the plane and Karie and the meds just stepped right off the plane and into the canoe. They left as soon as they could knowing that time was of the essence. The kids & I (Jesse) traveled to Madang this morning and are now in contact with Karie 2 times a day on the radio, email if necessary, and she can always climb a tree to call me.

Karie told me that as of right now 52 people have been or are being treated for cholera. There have been 4 to 5 severe cases, but so far no loss of life, since the "task force" and our nurse have started treating them.

Karie also dealt with another medical situation after getting back to Samban. Around 9 pm a 15 year old boy was brought in that had been bitten by a snake. It was a death adder that was still attached to the boy when they killed it. Karie used the snake zapper and made him as comfortable as possible. Informing them to wake her up if the boy exhibited the signs of the snake, she went to bed, after informing the task force doctor of the situation. At 1 am one of the parents woke up Karie saying that their son was showing the signs of the venom. Karie walked down to where the task force doctor was staying and they agreed that hooking up an IV might dissolve the venom. So the doctor did that, and all they could do was hope and pray. By 9am the signs had disappeared, and by 10am the boy was on his way home, being carried by the tractor back down to their families' canoes. She said that this was God thing because there's no other way to explain it.

I would have to agree. I've never heard of anyone, start showing the signs, and then survive.

I personally struggled with Karie going back knowing that cholera was present. However, I know now that if I had not, she wouldn't have been there to help with the situation.

As you can see there is a lot to be thankful for, however, the spread is worse with every day. About one in every household in Samban has cholera. I'm assuming that if one has got it, that it will continue to be spread. Everyone in the community is pitching in to stop the spread. Tommorrow every family is filling in their old pit toilets and digging new ones. Karie and some guys on the soccer team that I coach have set up tubs with heavy solution of bleach to clean all drinking containers. They were washing them all day. They're also using a water purifier to treat any water for bacteria. There were two rain showers while we were gone, so we have ¾'s of a water tank, so she is filling anyone and everyone's water container, who will bring it.

According to the task force doctor, there is a less than 1 percent fatality rate for those who are being treated with cholera. That is good news. However, please keep praying that those who have it would recover fully, and the spread would stop.

Jesse

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**Date:** Wed, 1 Dec 2010

Hello All, It is 8:00am on Thursday here. The word from the village is encouraging. Though it is confirmed Cholera, because the Workmen were there quickly and are treating patients quickly, most are treated for 12 hours and released. Only Jeremiah is still being treated though he is off the IV now and eating so it looks like the worst for him is past. The task force reported there are new patients this morning but no deaths. Keep up the prayers; we will let you know more as we know it. There are 18 confirmed cholera cases spreading from Laten to Samban. kp

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**Date:** December 1, 2010

Dear Friends and Family,

Thank you so much for praying during this tense time. Right now it is Wed., Dec 1, 11:30am so about Tues 8:30pm your time. The cholera task force arrived in Samban last night around 6:30 they made really good time. This morning we have already received a call informing us of all that is happening. 5 more possible cases have been reported and these people are on saline drips and antibiotics. The village councilors have been in a meeting and are inspecting all toilet facilities and regrounding inadequate facilities and ordering families to dig new pits. Cholera is spread via oral fecal route and so flies are our main enemy now. Flies that land on feces and then our food or cups or plates. The Dr.'s and nurses are doing all they can and if there are more than 10 confirmed cases by 5:00pm tonight the provincial government will send in additional personnel and supplies. Our workmen have assisted the task force by making our small house wind or shelter house available for the patients as it has long benches and good ventilation. We praise the Lord that in PNG (where it usually takes weeks for things to happen)

the Dr.s were moved to come quickly and help the people. This is unusual as it usually take 10 reported cases before they will mobilize. It is also a big praise that logistics went smoothly yesterday and they arrived right at dusk. We ask for your prayers of protection for those putting themselves in harm's way to help the sick. Also pray for the Dr.s and nurses that they will have a mind to work through all the tiredness and heat and frustration, & for the people as they fight this disease by cleaning up and digging new toilets, washing and bleaching everything. Pray that they will see the importance of healthy living practices. Pray for wisdom as we decide how we can best help the people at this time.

We were out of the village here in Wewak when it started, but had planned to be home by now. We are remaining in Wewak until we can go home safely or Jesse will take the children to Madang and I will return to be of further assistance. Once again, thank you for your prayers.  
Karie and Jesse

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**Date:** November 29, 2010

Dear friends we are safe in Wewak right now, but we ask your urgent prayers for Samban village. The nurse and our family have traveled to Wewak to get medicines and supplies and after we arrived we received word that a man in his 30's died suddenly of diarrhea lasting only 12 hours. Today we received news of the second death; this man lived about 12 hours as well. It sounds as though Cholera may have entered the village. We ask for your prayers for the people as we are not there and the nurse is not there. We are trying right now to get a medical task force to come to the village on an emergency flight in the morning to test and see if it is cholera. Both men were middle-aged, otherwise healthy as far as we know. We are praising the Lord that we are in Wewak and able to arrange flights for medical workers to come quickly, but sad that we cannot be there to help. We are trying to send the nurse back today so that she will be there to put in IV lines. We ask your prayers of protection for her. We have received extra drip solution so our equipment is ready, we just need to get there. The next 24 hours is when we should be able to tell the spread and hopefully locate the source. We will have our own tank water purified (with our own system) and available to the people. Thankfully we have plenty of soap and bleach so that people can take care to wash things properly to prevent the spread of this disease. We thank you all for being there for us in prayer it means so much. Jesse and karie Pryor Monday Novemeber 29<sup>th</sup> 3:30pm (Sunday night midnight your time)

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