



*SIGN Field Reports  
take you with us as  
we walk the world!*

**Myanmar:** Myitkyina General Hospital

**Launching a SIGN Program**

*by Dr. Jeff Ralston*

Deb and I have returned from our most recent trip to Myanmar. Each trip is an adventure that we enjoy. Our familiarity with the country and our deepening relationships with the people of Myanmar make the visits very rewarding.

We started in Yangon by visiting Yangon General Hospital (YGH). This hospital continues to be very busy with orthopaedic trauma. I am always impressed and humbled by the number of trauma patients and the complexity of the injuries. SIGN Nails are being used routinely in YGH and orthopaedic surgeons at all levels of experience are becoming proficient in their use. Dr. Aung Thein Htay, the country coordinator for SIGN, is a strong advocate for the people of Myanmar and a committed SIGN Surgeon. I had an opportunity to interact with the Myanmar orthopaedic surgeons both professionally and socially. I am now a familiar presence at morning audit rounds, ward rounds, and in the operating theater. All of these interactions provide an opportunity to exchange ideas, teach, and learn.

Dr. Aung,  
the **SIGN**  
Coordinator  
for Myanmar,  
identifies new  
hospitals and  
trains new  
**SIGN**  
Surgeons.

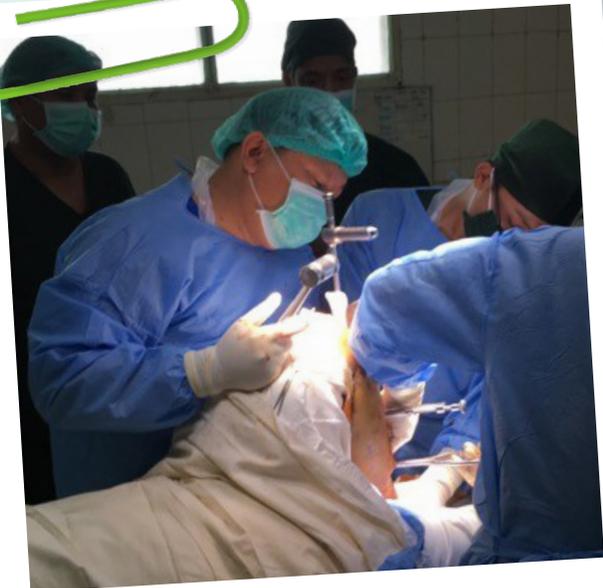


**Myanmar SIGN Programs**



★ Myitkyina General Hospital  
● Other SIGN Programs in Myanmar

# Myanmar: Myitkyina General Hospital



Dr. Naw performs the first **SIGN** Surgery at Myitkyina General Hospital.

Myanmar continues to have challenges, but Deb and I witness positive changes every time we visit. The government has committed to increasing the number of orthopaedic surgeons in the country. In the last two years, the number of surgeons in training has increased substantially. It is a pleasure to interact with eager young surgeons.

The highlight of our trip was a visit to Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, in northern Myanmar. Kachin is a majority Christian state and is resource rich, while it's people remain very poor. Myitkyina is home to many internally displaced people.

Deb and I presented new SIGN Implants and Instruments to Myitkyina General Hospital (MGH), the largest hospital in Kachin State. MGH is staffed by

two very capable orthopaedic surgeons. Dr. Naw Aung Kareng has agreed to coordinate the newly established SIGN Program.

Myitkyina General Hospital is well situated to implement a SIGN Program. The hospital is the referral center for the entire state, there are a significant number of trauma admissions, the hospital does not have a C-arm, and the currently available implants

are of inferior quality and are expensive for the predominantly indigent population.

Dr. Aung and I assisted Dr. Naw in the first SIGN Surgery. Prior to

## Field Report

the arrival of SIGN, this patient's fracture may have been treated non-operatively or he would have been required to purchase an expensive, inferior product.

Dr. Aung and I spent the evening prior to surgery reviewing x-rays and preparing the implants with Dr. Naw. The following morning, under the close supervision of Dr. Aung, Dr. Naw was able to operate on two tibia fractures using the SIGN System. It was clear to us that his patients are in capable, caring hands.

*Thank you to Jeff and Deb Ralston for sponsoring and carrying SIGN Equipment to Myitkyina in their luggage. To become a SIGN Courier, please contact: [programoffice@signfracturecare.org](mailto:programoffice@signfracturecare.org)*



Dr. Naw, Dr. Aung, and Dr. Ralston present **SIGN** Instruments to Myitkyina Hospital.