



Post Polio Care: The Future

[Dr. William DeMayo, MD](https://www.papolionetwork.org/demayos-q-a-clinic.html)

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By now many readers of this newsletter are aware of the awesome job that Carol Ferguson and the Pa. Polio Network Team did arranging the event “Post-Polio Care: Past, Present, and Future” in August, 2017. Their energy organizing and publicizing this event was infectious and led to a packed room as well as multiple remote sites /webcast participants. Nearly 200 individuals either turned out in person or connected via the webcast. Dr. Daniel Wilson and I thoroughly enjoyed interacting with each other and fielded many questions.

Dr. Wilson presented a fascinating talk on Polio history* and I spent my allotted speaking time talking about my perspectives on current Post-Polio care, challenges, and trends. During the question and answer session, we had several opportunities to discuss links between the historical past and current trends. Unfortunately, my presentation time did not allow much discussion about the future of Post-Polio care and we decided to hold those slides for another event.

My presentation did start with some news about rather significant future changes for me personally. With recent changes in our healthcare system, it has become more and more difficult to continue as a solo private practice physician. In my searches for consulting work, I was honored with a job offer to be the Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at a new rehabilitation hospital in Abu Dhabi (the United Arab Emirates). With our four children all out of the home and no grandchildren in the near future, my wife and I decided to embark on this temporary adventure. The move is also in line with my desire to learn more about healthcare internationally and eventually share American expertise in rehabilitation with other countries around the world. Although the United Arab Emirates has its roots in a conservative Muslim society, it is very different from its neighbors and there are now 80% of residents who are expatriates (temporary residence with citizenship in other countries). It is truly a melting pot of cultures from around the world. There is a high degree of tolerance for individual religious beliefs and Abu Dhabi was recently designated as the safest city in the world as well as one of the top cities in the world to live and work.



It is my hope to continue interacting with the PA Polio Network and writing newsletter articles as possible. Once I am established in my new position, I also hope to seek out resources that would allow a possible webcast event where I could discuss my thoughts on the future of healthcare for polio survivors. Ideally, this would involve Dr. Wilson and/or other local experts participating in an interactive way through an online connection. My long-term vision involves large educational experiences such as this as well as one-on-one or small group interactions for in-depth discussion on specific issues facing Polio survivors.

There are certainly challenges engaging an aging population with this approach however, through the efforts of Carol and her team, “Post-Polio Care: Past, Present, and Future” has certainly proved that the technology is available and Polio survivors are interested and ready to take advantage of it.

For those who may like to follow my travels, I hope to be using my practice website to share

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information while I'm gone. The site, www.demayoclinic.com, is a very basic self-made website but I will try to post information once I am established in Abu Dhabi. Additionally, the hospital website, srh.ae, will have information on their Specialized Rehabilitation Hospital which is going to be the first acute inpatient rehabilitation hospital in the region.

Lastly, I get a lot of questions like "What is it going to be like living in Abu Dhabi" or "Where is the United Arab Emirates (UAE)". For those interested, I have posted a regional map and the following informative links.

While I look forward to this adventure, I also look forward to my return and serving PA Polio survivors and Polio survivors globally with new perspectives and insights.

****Editor's Note:** Dr. DeMayo asked that we publish his article unedited. We are grateful for his kind words. We have sent him abroad with the best of wishes for an amazing adventure. The informative and entertaining video(s) of Dr. DeMayo and Dr. Wilson are easily available on our [website](#).

- [Fifteen things to know if you just moved to Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Abu Dhabi is the safest city on the planet](#)
- [Abu Dhabi named second best place to live and work](#)

