

TRAINING MISSION IN LIMBE, HAITI

Objectives achieved



By Catherine Rioux, general manager

From November 10 to 17, Dr. Nicole Vachon, a volunteer Optometrist, and Catherine Rioux, General Manager at IRIS Mundial went to Haiti to offer a week of training for the team members of the Prevention and Fight against Blindness Program (PPFB) in Limbe.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

The purpose of this mission, which included clinical supervision as well as theoretical and practical training, was to improve the eye care skills and to consolidate the staff's acquired knowledge on the subjects taught during the last training sessions. Planned program: videos, simulations, quizzes and practice on instruments. The team members really appreciated it! They also learned how to use new visual screening tests, which they were able to put into practice during the mobile clinic at the Notre-Dame-des-Douleurs Centre, where as many as 87 patients were screened during a single day. A huge thank you to Dr. Vachon for her dedication to disadvantaged people!



CONSOLIDATION PHASE - MOVING TOWARDS AUTONOMY

The training continued for a second week with Ms. Rioux in order to support the implementation of new activities for the second phase of the program which will last two years. This will allow 8,500 patients to receive quality eye care. The purpose of these new activities is to optimize the clinic's management and services, and furthermore to ensure a better visibility of the program to the population. Therefore, promotional and awareness-raising tools were created and a radio advertisement was developed. Also, a new nurse consulting service has been set up and will be available in the program. The team members were happy with the new activities which will help maximize resources and therefore help the program become self-sufficient.

RECOVER SIGHT THANKS TO SURGERY

During the mission, Ms. Rioux and Ms. Nadia Bazil, the program's Head Nurse, went to the Vision Plus Clinic in Cap-Haïtien, to meet the ophthalmologists who perform eye surgeries for the program's beneficiaries. This visit gave them the opportunity to attend a cataract surgery that was performed on Mr. Gabriel Séide, one of the program's patients. They were delighted with the experience. A few days after the surgery, Mr. Séide, who is a Tailor by profession, returned to the clinic in Limbe to express his appreciation to the team members: "The surgery I had to remove the cataract in my eye made my vision perfect. Before this intervention, I had trouble walking alone. I had to be very careful, because if I had lost the other eye, I would have been totally blind. Losing sight in one of my eyes represents for me the loss of half of my life, as the eyes of a person are his life". He expresses warm thanks to IRIS Mundial for helping him to see again.

In conclusion, after a busy stay, Ms. Rioux returned to Quebec very satisfied of the work done with the PPFB program team members in Limbe. All mission objectives have also been achieved thanks to the good cooperation of our partners and team members!

