

Surgery (Maxillofacial, Plastic Reconstructive and General Surgeries)

Mercy Ships Programme Fact Sheet

Updated January 2012

Deformities in Developing Nations



George, Liberia
Cleft Lip and Palate Repair



Marthaline, Liberia
Tumour Removal



Ismalia, Liberia
Noma Reconstruction

*Lives transformed
through hope
and healing...*

Why is the need so extreme?

For the poor in developing nations, accessing necessary medical and surgical care is extremely difficult due to their remote location, lack of medical facilities and financial constraints. Conditions that would be treated in the early stages in developed nations, grow to the point of being life threatening. The consequence for many is a lifetime of disability, rejection and sometimes even death.

Tumours

Disfiguring tumours often begin as small growths, but when left untreated, grow to the point of being life threatening as a person struggles to breathe or eat, and render their victims social outcasts.

Noma (Oral Disease)

Not seen in the Western world since concentration camps, noma, or cancrum oris, is an infectious disease destroying oro-facial tissues. Predominantly affecting children, the disease advances quickly, spreading to the nose, lips and cheeks. Though both preventable and treatable, thousands die from the condition each year. Those who survive are left with horrendous disfigurement.

Statistics

- Cleft lip and palate is the number-one facial birth defect and the fourth most-common birth defect overall, affecting 1 in 700-1,000 live births (WHO).
- About 70-90% of noma cases are fatal in the absence of care. Africa remains the hardest-hit continent (WHO)

Cleft Lip and Palate

Cleft lip and/or palate is a condition easily repaired in the developed world, but cleft-lip babies born in developing countries are often malnourished because they cannot feed properly. Children who do survive are often rejected because of their deformity.

Others

Burn injuries, chronic ulcers, hernias and goiters create acute and neglected trauma not seen in developed nations. Often injuries are compounded from lack of adequate treatment and require specialised procedures to provide relief.

Transformational health care through onboard Surgery Programmes

Bringing Hope and Healing

Mercy Ships increases access to health care throughout the world. Through the deployment of the world's largest, private hospital ship, the *Africa Mercy*, Mercy Ships helps fill the gaps in health care systems, while serving the dire and immediate needs of their population. Mercy Ships provides training opportunities for medical professionals along with curative surgical interventions. Collaborating with qualified local and international partners, Mercy Ships programmes offer holistic support to developing nations striving to make health care accessible for all.



Patient Screening



Onboard Operations



Recovery Ward

Surgery

Mercy Ships partners with the local medical community in each country to identify surgical candidates. In onboard operating theatres, highly skilled surgeons perform thousands of free maxillo-facial, general and reconstructive operations, transforming and saving lives.

Recovery & Counselling

Patients recuperate under world-class care in the ship's hospital ward, where they are also provided with opportunity for moral and spiritual support. Mercy Ships aims to provide a caring, holistic environment to help patient recovery.

Training & Prevention

Mercy Ships collaborates with local governments and ministries of health to improve national healthcare infrastructure. Mercy Ships partners with local surgeons and nurses to provide training and educational opportunities in appropriate techniques. In addition, Mercy Ships contributes to the long-term eradication of preventable diseases and resulting extreme conditions by conducting community health education programs.

Accomplishment

Performed more than 61,000 life-changing operations such as cleft lip and palate repair, cataract removal, orthopaedic procedures, facial reconstruction and obstetric fistula repair.

