

# Mercy Ships and CURE International Announce Partnership Providing Surgery to Reach More Children Living with Disabilities

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Mercy Ships and CURE International announced a partnership to provide specialized surgical care to children living with disabilities across the continent of Africa. Both organizations provide hope and healing to children living with disabilities through surgical care in under-resourced countries.

During a time when the COVID -19 pandemic has made access to specialized surgical care even more difficult, combining the resources of two like-minded organizations will provide treatment to the most vulnerable in under-resourced countries like Uganda and Niger. Even before the pandemic, children that need specialized surgical care often wait years before receiving treatment because of limited national resources or the lack of specialized doctors, resulting in added economic burdens for their families and additional suffering. The pandemic has only further compounded these factors.

“An estimated 16.9 million people die each year from lack of accessible surgical care. A situation that has only been made worse by the current COVID pandemic. Addressing that need in Africa requires partnership and collaboration. Together with our colleagues at CURE we are pleased to be able to extend the essential services Mercy Ships provides alongside our ship-based programs,” said Dr Peter Linz, Mercy Ships International Chief Medical Officer.



“Dr. Peter Linz and I meet on a monthly basis with the Chief Medical Officers from two other medical NGOs to

discuss COVID and it became clear that if we pooled our resources and people, it would increase our capacity to reach even more children in need of surgical care,” said Dr. Richard Gardner, Chief Medical Officer of CURE International.

Mercy Ships sent UK volunteer anesthesiologist, Dr. Sarah Kwok, to the CURE Children’s Hospital of Uganda, which has been open during the pandemic and admitting children in need of specialized neurological care for conditions like hydrocephalus.

“It has been a privilege to work with CURE Uganda at their neurosurgical hospital. The children here have life threatening conditions and the surgeries performed on a daily basis are changing lives and transforming futures. I have joined a team of amazing anesthesia providers and we are learning so much from each other. My hope is that CURE and Mercy Ships continue to partner together to provide the highest standards of care for every child we touch,” stated Dr Kwok.

Additionally, Dr. Tertius Venter, a South African volunteer plastic reconstructive surgeon for Mercy Ships is also currently at the CURE Children’s Hospital of Niger assisting in the provision of surgery to children who have suffered from the effects of burn accidents that contract their skin and limit mobility.

“We’re so excited to join hands with Mercy Ships to increase access to surgical care in strategic locations across the CURE network. The challenges of COVID have resulted in creative solutions and a collaborative partnership that helps us effectively treat the most vulnerable, children with disabilities,” said Justin Narducci, President & CEO of CURE International.