

Casa de Luz Medical and Eye Surgery Humanitarian Trip

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For the fourth time I joined the “Dominican republic Eye Mission” organized by Island Impact Ministries (www.islandimpact.net) and Casa de la Luz (www.casa-de-luz.com). Our goal is to provide free surgical and medical eye care in the poorest province of the Dominican Republic, primarily for underprivileged children and adults who do not have access to eye medical care.



The surgery and clinical support is performed at the Ricardo Limardo Public Hospital in Puerto Plata, where no tap water is available and where the hospital is flooded when it rains.



On Sunday, our first working day, we unpacked and sorted supplies, did preoperative workup, planning, and chart preparation for surgery patients, and prepared for a full week of surgery and clinic.



From Monday to Friday the surgical team performed 159 strabismus, cataract and pterygium surgeries, while I and Leen, a Belgian optician-optometrist, concurrently ran the eye clinic, offering eye glasses, patches, drops and triage for ophthalmic-emergencies.



More than 400 patients were examined and treated the best we could with reading glasses, sun glasses, occlusion or eye drops.



This year I could use a Retinomax hand-held auto-refractometer from Technop Belgium which facilitated refracting the mostly analphabetic patients.



The ORTOPAD patches donated by Masteraid were given to the deep amblyopic children to improve at least some visual acuity in the “bad” eye.



Every day hundreds of people were waiting for free eye care, often queuing from early morning to be sometimes examined in the afternoon.



This mission was again for me an unforgettable and satisfying experience, which I hopefully can repeat next year.

Many thanks Mr Hartmut Otto - Trusetal Verbandstoffwerk GmbH who sponsored this trip for me. www.tshs.eu