

A 19-Year Record of Training Haitian Residents in Otorhinolaryngology and Cervicofacial Surgery[☆]

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OBJECTIVES: Since 1996, 1 to 4 annual training missions have been carried out to train Haitian otorhinolaryngology (ENT) and cervicofacial surgery residents by the association Liens Otorhinolaryngologie Aÿti (LOA). Until 1996, ENT was practiced and taught by ophthalmologists. The aim of this article is to describe the contributions and limitations of LOA in training of Haitian resident physicians and the creation of the ENT specialty in Haiti.

DESIGN: Retrospective analysis of clinical consultation and surgical interventions records and didactics carried out during missions from 1996 through 2014.

PARTICIPANTS: A total of 37 missions were made during the 19-year period in which 29 senior ENT specialists participated, with an average of 3.37 missions per physician.

RESULTS: A total of 10,300 consultations and 173 surgical procedures were made jointly by a senior LOA physician and a Haitian resident physician. Totally 16 Haitian ENT residents were trained, 81% of whom are still practicing in Haiti. ENT became a surgical specialty in 2001 after the nomination of a Haitian ENT specialist as Assistant Director of the ENT-Ophthalmology service. The latter benefitted from dual training by LOA in Haiti and abroad.

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CONCLUSION: The Haitian population experiences significant difficulties with access to medical care owing to very low number of resident medical personnel. LOA's work has contributed over 19 years to the training of ENT physicians now practicing in Haiti and to the creation of a local ENT specialty. (J Surg 72:1068-1076. © 2015 Association of Program Directors in Surgery. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.)

KEY WORDS: Haiti, ENT, training, surgery, residency

COMPETENCIES: Patient Care, Medical Knowledge, Professionalism, Practice-Based Learning and Improvement, Systems-Based Practice

INTRODUCTION

Haiti, with an average of 5.9 physicians or nurses for every 10,000 inhabitants, is far below the minimum World Health Organization standard of 25 health professionals for every 10,000 inhabitants.¹

Since 1996, 1 to 4 times each year, a week of resident training for Haitian otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose, and throat, or ENT) specialists has been organized through cooperation between the hospital of Port-au-Prince (Hôpital de l'Université d'Etat d'Haïti [HUEH]) and the University Hospitals of Strasbourg (HUS). Resident physicians benefit from didactic and practical training in ENT surgery following an established 3-year university program. The aim of this article is to describe the training of Haitian ENT specialists over 19 years of collaboration.

TABLE 1. Missions Organized Each Year From 1996 Through June 2014 at the HUEH

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Missions	1	2	4	4	2												13
Residents OPH-ENT	3	4	7	6	4												20
Consultations	200	450	1200	1300	700												3850
Operating cases	4	8	8	32	8												60
Missions	3	3	1	1	1												24
Residents OPH-ENT	5	3-6	1	3	2												17
Consultations	900	750	300	300	300												6450
Operating cases	7	15	0	7	0												88

OPH, ophthalmology.

Until the beginning of this century in Haiti, ENT medical and surgical practice was performed by ophthalmologists. Their lack of knowledge about cervicofacial surgery led to treatment failure, particularly in cancer treatment. In 1996, through the inspiration of Haitian ophthalmologist Dr. Cadet, Haitian cardiologist Dr. Malebranche, and ENT specialist Dr. Pierre Bailly of Mulhouse, France, made two 1-week visits to Haiti for needs assessment and to transport minimum necessary consultation material and surgical instruments.

These initial trips confirmed the significant need for a full, separate ENT service supported by local administrative authorities and the Haitian medical corps. In 1997, the association Liens Otorhinolaryngology Ayiti (LOA) was created ('Loa' is a benign voodoo spirit in Haitian Creole).²

The initial goal was to establish an efficient service to address all ENT pathologies, a reference service through which difficult cases could be addressed and a teaching service to train specialists, generalists, and nursing personnel. Initially 2 agreements were signed (150000F in 1998 and 250000F in 1999) with the French Ministry for Cooperation and then with the Institute for Regional Cooperation and Development (IRCOD) in 2000.³ The first ENT equipment (forehead lamps, microscopes, and speculum and surgical instruments) was sent to the ENT hospitals and the Port-au-Prince Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy (FMP) was established in 1999, permitting the establishment of a training program for resident ENT personnel and thus creating this specialty in Haiti.

During each week of training, 2 French senior ENT specialists supervised consultations carried out by the resident Haitians and attended surgery 5 mornings. A total of 5 half-days of didactic courses were taught, with a final evaluation by written examination. Through a study grant, 4 resident Haitian ENT specialists completed their training including 3 years of ENT internship at HUS, at Mulhouse Moenchsberg General Hospital, and at Le Havre Gustave Flaubert General Hospital.

The aim of this article is to describe these 19 years of Haitian medical and surgical resident training. We will detail the training, number of residents who became senior ENT specialists, their outcomes, and the history of developing an independent Haitian ENT service.

METHODS

This study does not fall within the scope of the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO), which means that it did not need to be reviewed by an accredited medical ethical reviewing committee.

We retrospectively analyzed clinical activities, including consultation, surgical intervention, and the teaching carried out across 19 years from 1996 through 2014. Data on the number of missions, consultations, type of surgical

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