



## **NEW SIGHT EYE CARE**

**Registered Address:** The Megacentre, 32 York Road, Leeds LS9 8SY

**Charity Commission Registration Nr:** 1144893

### **Annual Report for the year ending April 2017**

#### **OVERVIEW:**

New Sight Eye Care is a registered charity founded in the UK in 2011, and is constituted by Memorandum and Articles of Association. We provide support and financial aid from the UK to the Republic of Congo to pioneer the first and only eye surgery centre in the northern part of the country.

The charity, whose objects are below, is administered by the Trustees, namely;

Dr. Joyce Samoutou-Wong

Mr. Henri Samoutou

Mr. Christopher Denham

Dr. Terence Pang

Mrs. Safi Newton

The charity is governed by trust deed administered by the trustees, as well as being a non-profit limited company. There are five trustees at any time. When a vacancy occurs, the trustees note the fact in the minutes of their next meeting. The trustees discuss a possible candidate with relevant experience and commitment. Apart from the first trustees, every trustee is appointed by a resolution of the trustees passed at a special meeting. Mrs. Linda Adam's resignation was accepted and the board thanked her for her services in April 2016. Dr. Terence Pang was appointed by a resolution of the trustees in May 2016.

The **OBJECTIVES** of the charity are:

1. The advancement of health, and the saving of lives in particular (but without limitation), by providing assistance overseas principally (but not exclusively) in the Republic of Congo for those affected with sight difficulties; and
2. To fulfil such other purposes which are exclusively charitable according to the law of England and Wales and are connected to the charitable work of the Charity as the Trustees may from time to time think fit.

## ACTIVITIES, PROGRESS and PLANS to date:

The north of Congo has never had an eye centre. This is the reason that Joyce and Henri Samoutou uprooted their family's life in the UK in April 2012 to pioneer the first and only non-profit eye centre in the north of Congo. The eye centre is based in Pioneer Christian Hospital in Impfondo, the capital of the Likouala Region. This general hospital founded in 2006 is developing rapidly. It has 32 buildings in a 17-acre site. It has grown to 75 beds in recent years. New Sight and the hospital continue to enjoy good relationships with the government, the Ministry of Health, as well as the local authorities and communities. We collaborate frequently with other non-profit organisations such as United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and Médecins d'Afrique, who frequently send their patients to us for eye treatment.

In line with the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development, the vision of the World Health Organisation, and the WHO Global Action Plan 2014-19, OUR VISION is a world

- Where nobody is needlessly visually impaired
- Where those with unavoidable visual loss can achieve their full potential
- Where there is universal access to comprehensive eye care services

The target is a 25% global reduction of avoidable blindness and visual impairment by the year 2019 from 2010. New Sight aligns itself with this vision and works to ensure delivery of these targets. According to the WHO, worldwide, 4 in 5 people who are blind or severely visually impaired are blind from avoidable causes. This means that we can prevent or treat their blindness. New Sight follows the technical guidance provided by International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness in collaboration with the WHO to plan, budget and purchase the equipment and consumables needed. In the year ending April 2016, the number of consultations in the clinic was 1549 and the number of people screened was 506. The total number of patient encounters was therefore 2055. The bulk of our charity's surgery is to remove cataracts. To remove cost as a barrier to access of care, we provided all operations free of charge. Patients blind from cataracts can see again the day after this one-off operation. When sight is restored, lives are transformed, not just for the patients, but also for their families and even the wider communities.<sup>1 2</sup> There have been several well documented studies that proved cataract surgery to be one of the top operations with the most measurable improvement in quality of life, and supported the argument that it offers economic benefit to relieve poverty.<sup>3 4 5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Javitt JC, Venkataswamy G, Sommer A. 'The economic and social impact of restoring sight'. In: Henkind P (ed) ACTA: 24th International Congress of Ophthalmology. Philadelphia, PA: JB Lippincott, 1983.

<sup>2</sup> International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment. Annual Report 2004. <http://www.icevi.org/publications/Annual%20Report%202004.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Javitt et al. Int. Ophthalmol. 1983: 1308-1312.

<sup>4</sup> Kuper et al. 'Does Cataract surgery alleviate poverty? Evidence from a Multi-Centre Intervention Study Conducted in Kenya, the Philippines and Bangladesh'. PLoS Medicine 2010; 5.11.

<sup>5</sup> Faal and Gilbert. 'Convincing governments to act: VISION 2020 and the Millennium Development Goals'. Community Eye Health. 2007 December; 20(64): 62-64.

In addition to cataract surgery, we provide vision tests and aids (e.g. glasses), prevention and treatment of eye diseases and systemic illness involving the eye (e.g. diabetes and hypertension), an 'accidents and emergency' service, as well as other surgeries (e.g. for glaucoma and pterygium). Free administration of Vitamin A supplements and River Blindness treatment are also offered. For those who are assessed to be genuinely unable to afford paying for our very low-cost non-profit services, their costs are covered by New Sight's charitable poverty fund.

For the year ending April 2017, some key development and activities included:

- In May 2016, we employed our first part-time staff in the UK to support our work in Congo.
- In May 2016, the board approved the decision to further respond to the invitation of the local authorities to explore the possibility of setting a new eye hospital in the new location of Ouessou, the capital of the La Sangha in the Republic of Congo.
- In July 2016, we conducted our second pre-feasibility study in Ouessou. The first study was completed in October 2015 where it was evident that Ouessou is in great and desperate need for eye care, and that the local government and health authorities are supportive of our expansion there. During the second pre-feasibility study, we investigated several land options before choosing a 6-hectare piece of land 5 minutes from the city centre.
- In August 2016, the prefect who is the head of the Likouala region invited us to his office to congratulate us, as he has been hearing glowing reports about our work everywhere in the country, even in the capital. He encouraged us to keep up the good work. It was really encouraging, but far more importantly, the growing reputation and positive testimonies mean that more patients will now be aware of the help available, and that they are more likely to overcome their fear of eye surgery – still a new, foreign and often frightening concept to many – and accept our help.
- In September 2016, Leanne and Ethan Borman arrived in Congo from the United States of America to volunteer for New Sight for 6 months. Their main role was to teach the three Samoutou children, so that Joyce and Henri could be relieved from home-schooling responsibilities to spend more time on New Sight.
- In September 2016, New Sight travelled to Epena, the biggest town south to our hospital, for a 3-day free screening and health education campaign. We screened nearly 200 patients and identified over 20 cases for surgery. The venue and logistics were organised with the help of the Mayor.
- In October 2016, we welcomed and hosted Natalie Lo, a medical student from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

- In October 2016, Joyce and Henri Samoutou represented New Sight at the 10th General Assembly for International Eye Health in Durban, South Africa. This General Assembly is held every 4 years by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness in collaboration with World Health Organisation. Together with Dr. Andy Cassels-Brown, Consultant Ophthalmologist of St James University Hospital, UK, we presented our scientific paper during the meeting.
- In November 2016, the purchase of the 6-hectare piece of land in Ouessou was completed, with one of the six hectares being a donation from the mayor office in Ouessou. A team of topographic surveyors from Brazzaville completed land studies. An architect from South Africa, along with an engineer and project adviser from Kenya, joined us for a feasibility visit in Ouessou for the masterplan of the Ouessou project. This future eye hospital is in a strategic location that can reach out to the whole of Congo, and perhaps even to neighbouring countries such as Cameroon and Central Africa Republic. The Ouessou Hospital will include:
  - i. Inpatient Department
  - ii. Outpatient Department
  - iii. Optical shop and Workshop
  - iv. Pharmacy
  - v. Surgical Unit
  - vi. Training Centre
  - vii. Staff and Visitors Quarters
  - viii. Core Infrastructure (electricity and water supply, incineration facility)
- During December 2016 – February 2017, New Sight was blessed with rebranding, graphic and web design services on a pro-bono basis from several designers. Our literature materials were updated and a new web site was launched.
- In February 2017, the masterplan planning stage for the Ouessou Project was completed.
- In March 2017, New Sight launched the fundraising appeal for the Ouessou project in Hong Kong and Singapore. New Sight hosted four major events which were all sold out. We were also invited to share about our work and vision in several other settings. We are very humbled by the support. In particular, a match donation to match dollar for dollar up to 1.25 million dollars was launched.
- In November 2017, we engaged an agent in the capital of Brazzaville and an agent in Ouessou in preparation for the expansion of New Sight
- The four nurses continue to grow in their clinical knowledge and skill, and they can now all do initial consultation independently, as well as some anaesthetic and minor surgeries.
- We continue to promote health education through campaigns in conjunction with screening, as well as on the radio.

- We continue to actively recruit long-termers to join the team.

In the UK, we continue our fundraising efforts by running our Priceless Gift Store – an online donation gift store.

Over the next 12 months, we will concentrate on developing our clinical service, as well as provide further training to our staff, so that they can be empowered to take over the eye centre in Impfondo. We will continue fundraising, building capacity, and planning for the new future Ouesso Eye Hospital.

Respectfully submitted by

Dr. Joyce Samoutou-Wong