



KRB Update #2227 – Diplomatic - Assessment Keith R. Brinkman with Mercy Ships 03 February 2018

Early tomorrow morning, I am flying out to Dakar capital city of Senegal with our Managing Director and incoming Vice President of International Programs. We will meet up with some other leaders from Mercy Ships. We are going at invitation of the government, in particular the Senegal delegation that came to the ship in January to see us in action in Cameroon. Together we are planning the Senegal Field Service for August 2019

– June 2020. The last time a Mercy Ship came to Senegal was early 1994.
Our meetings on Monday are with the Minister of Health, Technical Committee they have formed for Mercy Ships partnership and with the World Health Organization.

The last opportunity I served on the Diplomatic / Assessment Team was in Madagascar in 2014 after we changed our schedules due to the Ebola Virus in West Africa. After the Diplomatic component in Dakar, I will stay and serve with the Assessment Team. Assessment is conducted prior to a Mercy Ship coming into a country. As we need to identify and build relationships with the host nation to enable a partnerships based on the host nations capabilities. We also share Mercy Ships capability and limitation with the host nation.

General Information: Learn about culture, geography, population information, etc.; and collect more information on proper communication channels and key partnerships. Contacts – non-governmental organizations (NGOs), World Health Organization (WHO), embassies, United Nations UN, missionaries, churches, government contacts – both Senegalese and foreign governments – relationship building.

Collect Health System Data via surveys and hospital visits

Greatest surgical needs by type and population distribution / Possible Patient Selection strategy / Medical Capacity Building – their most significant medical training needs – one way is by visiting their universities and training schools.

Identify several buildings to renovate and locate our HOPE Center, Dental Clinic, and Eye Clinic in for the field service and the Ministry of Health's use afterwards. Port: Port assessment including berth space, water, trash, security, etc. / Security / Shipping Agent / Immigration and Customs Requirements – > 1,000 volunteers during a field service – though Senegal allows many nationalities to come in without a visa including the USA / Customs on incoming containers with medical supplies and our vehicles which come with the ship. Business – mobile phone companies, banks, etc. and many other tasks in the assessment process. A lot of work, challenging and exciting all at the same time.

Update on some of my patients:

We rejoice with Axel as he is home with his family, friends and church. He is giving all the thanks to God for his healing.

Edouard also returned home in a remote region of Cameroon, though I have lost mobile phone contact with him.

Please continue to pray for Rubain, 15 years old, from the far north region of Cameroon (4 day/night journey). He just had a second major surgery related to his lower leg. This surgery took place yesterday. I spent part of the morning with him and his dad in our hospital wards. He had a skin graft and will need healing before he can go home. Pray for his healing, no infections, the pain, therapy and being able to get around with crutches. Carlos is from the North West region where they speak English so communications with him and his mama is easier for me. He has a maxillofacial tumor and was rescheduled for April to come for his surgery.

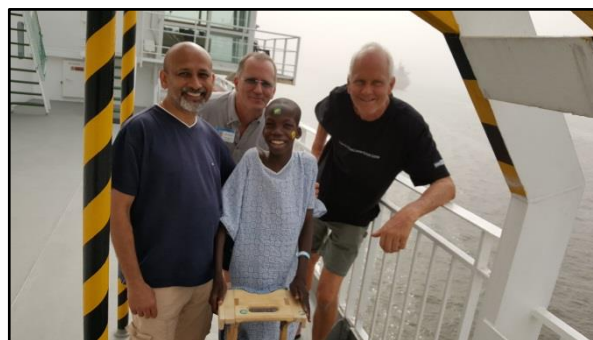
These are a few of the patients I visit and spend time with building relationship during my hospital visits which is only 30 seconds from my cabin and office.

Na Som Dita (Thank you very much in the local language of Douala)
Serving Together, *Keith*

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With Harbor Master at the Port of Toamasina, Assessment - Madagascar 2014



With Rubain on Deck 7 with a couple other crew members