

**MCMASTER DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY  
INTERNATIONAL SURGERY DESK  
ANNUAL REPORT – 2010**

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Since the ISD 'kick-off' with Chair's Rounds in June 2010, the momentum of interest and activity in international surgery at McMaster continues. The inaugural vision of the ISD is *"To facilitate international surgery activity within the Department, including an educational component in all projects, and collaborate with like-minded disciplines and colleagues within the McMaster University and Canadian surgical communities."* This report summarizes the 2010 **IS DESK** activities and presents a vision for the future.

**Development of sustainable partnerships:**

a. A longstanding collaboration between the Canadian Association of General Surgeons (CAGS) and **Guyana** continued with a 3-day visit to McMaster by Dr. Navindra Rambaran and Dr. Shilo Rajkumar in October. They attended an Evidence Based Medicine course organized by the ISD, were introduced to the Centre for Simulation Based Learning, met **Dr. Andrea Baumann** at the **Global Health Office(GHO)**, and toured the Hamilton General Hospital Trauma Unit with **Dr. Frank Baillie**.

Dr. Rajkumar has been continuing his training in Plastic Surgery supervised by **Dr. Nanda Nandagopaul**, Dr. Tim Sproule and **Dr. Yvonne Ying**, and including regular Skype conferences.

In November a McMaster surgical team visited Guyana for 3 weeks to do pediatric surgery and teach trauma skills using a high fidelity simulator. The team including **Dr. Karen Bailey, Dr. Luis Braga, Dr. Abdullah Ali, Dr. Rob Gowing, Dr. Dave Musson, Dr. Bill Harris** and **Dr. Brian Cameron**.

A \$25,000 **CIHR planning grant** won by the ISD will fund a meeting in May to develop research proposals around the theme: 'Teaching Surgical Skills by Web-Conferencing; a Canada-Guyana Collaboration'.

b. The ISD was awarded \$20,000 from the **Canada-Haiti Academic Projects Scholarship** program to boost surgical capacity at the Hopital la Paix in Port-au-Prince, working with the **St. Joseph's International Outreach Program (SIOP)**. As part of this initiative, **Dr. Carolyn Levis** and **Dr. Brad Petrisor** each spent a week teaching in Haiti in October, and plans are being made to host 3 Haitian surgeons here for a month in the New Year. **Dr. Margherita Cadeddu** will also help organize their local visit.

c. Invited by teaching hospitals in **Uganda**, **Dr. Peter Lovrics** and Dr. Brian Cameron will join the SIOP team in January to teach and assess the potential for developing a surgical partnership that would include hosting a Ugandan surgical resident in Hamilton for 3 months.

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**Education for international surgeons**

At Surgical Chair's Rounds in June, **Dr. Alex Mihailovic** enthralled a full auditorium with stories from her recent surgical visit to Haiti. In October, **Julia Pemberton MSc** led a 2 day critical appraisal and research workshop "From EBM to the OR" attended by 5 McMaster Fellows, 3 visiting surgeons, and 6 Guyanese physicians by Skype. The following week the ISD and GHO hosted a **Global Health Seminar** attended by over 100 people including students from the new Masters in Global Health program, with guest speakers **Dr. Steve Foster** from Angola and **Dr. Dan Poenaru** from Kenya. Pediatric surgeon **Dr. Lukman Abdur-Rahman** completed a rewarding 2 ½ month visit as a **Visiting Scholar**, sponsored by the World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons (WOFAPS) and the Division of Pediatric General Surgery.

Several surgical residents have done international electives this year including **Dr. Colin White** (Operation Rainbow, China), **Dr. Jola Omole** (Nigeria), and **Dr. Sara Kalechstein** (Guyana). **Dr. Omole** and **Dr. Cameron** completed the UBC graduate-level course '**Surgical Care in International Health**'. **Dr. Kalechstein** and **Dr. Gordon** completed the **CNIS Essential Surgical Skills Instructor** course.

**Service to those in need**

**Dr. John Harvey** regularly does short term Ophthalmology missions with Medical Ministry International and visited Bolivia earlier in the year. Others named above provided volunteer surgical services in Haiti, China, and Guyana. There may well be other unrecognized surgical volunteers in the Department – we acknowledge and thank you for your contributions.

**Knowledge: research and dissemination**

We aim to develop more capacity and contributions to the growing academic field of international surgery. **Dr. Mohit Bhandari** co-founded the **Indian Society for Research in Orthopedics** with Indian surgical colleagues. ISD Research Coordinator **Julia Pemberton**'s paper 'Essential Surgical Services' was published in the **McMaster University Medical Journal**, and she collaborated with **Dr. Maggie Gordon** on podium presentations at the **Bethune Round Table** on International Surgery and **Canadian Surgery Forum**.

The ISD has joined the **Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research (CCGHR)**, is seeking collaborations within the university through the Global Health Office, and looking for funding opportunities.

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**ISD Administrative structure**

The International Surgery Desk operates within the Office of Education and with the full support of the Associate Chair **Dr. Susan Reid**. An **ISD Advisory Committee** has been initiated.

Administrative support is provided by **Kathy Wilson**, and **Gillian Wood** edits the newsletter and website. Two newsletters were published in June and October, and the ISD website was launched in the fall (<http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/surgery/ISD.html>). The McMaster ISD is a member of the Canadian Network for International Surgery (CNIS - [www.cnis.ca/](http://www.cnis.ca/)) and the CAGS International Surgery Committee.

**Looking ahead to 2011 ... and the next 3 years**

Collaborations with Haiti, Guyana and Uganda will continue as detailed above. We plan to submit several papers to the Bethune Round Table taking place in Montreal June 3-5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (abstract **deadline January 17<sup>th</sup>** - see the CNIS website). The **CNIS 'Structured Hernia Repair' Instructor Course** will be offered at McMaster on **June 1<sup>st</sup>**. The June **Chair Rounds** will again have an international surgery theme.

We are planning the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the **ISD Advisory Committee** for late February 2011, and hope to have representation from all surgical Divisions.

The Agenda will be based on some of the issues raised in the ISD Survey including:

- a. International Resident Electives: preparation, funding, objectives, evaluation.
- b. ISD Scholarship Fund: terms of reference, sources of funding
- c. ISD Annual Dinner: when, where, and who?
- d. Merit points for international surgery activity?
- e. What is our vision for the ISD in 3 years?

respectfully submitted by,

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