

The CHU Sainte-Justine

An International Vision for the Health of Mothers and Children

Years of acquired expertise

The Sainte-Justine University Hospital Centre (CHUSJ) has a long tradition of carrying out international missions, whether of an institutional, humanitarian or trade nature. They are at the heart of the organization's mission and contribute to improving the health of mothers and children through the learning opportunities they provide for both Quebec and partnering countries.

Thanks to the motivation of its teams and to its internationally recognized leadership in delivering care to mothers and children, the CHU Sainte-Justine carries out activities that reflect all of the mission areas which are characteristic of a university hospital centre: patient care, teaching, research, technology assessment, health promotion, and rehabilitation.

Over the past few years, the CHU Sainte-Justine has sent several clinical teams on missions abroad, namely to Morocco, Egypt, Mali, and Burkina Faso. Complete teams consisting of doctors and highly qualified health care workers delivered medical care to a large number of patients on-site, while providing theoretical and practical training to local health care professionals and ensuring the transfer of expertise. The CHU Sainte-Justine also played an important role in the relief efforts following Haiti's earthquake of January, 2010. The International Health and Adoption Clinic of the CHU Sainte-Justine, world recognized for its expertise, responded to the medical needs of a large group of adopted Haitian children.

In terms of institutional activities, the CHU Sainte-Justine has been presiding the Réseau mère-enfant de la Francophonie since 2002. This network is composed of twenty major university hospital centres from ten different countries. Its mission is to support the development of best practices in health management, research, education, and care aimed at improving the health of mothers and children of Quebec and the other member countries.

In terms of teaching and research activities, professional exchange programs are organized on a regular basis with other countries, such as China, Benin, Tunisia, and Uganda. A number of projects are currently being developed in the United Arab Emirates and India.

The benefits of such collaborations are numerous. These different missions help the participating local and international teams further their professional skills and expertise. Their impact on human resources of the CHU Sainte-Justine is significant: development, attraction, and retention of clinicians, professionals, and administrators.

“Taking part in international missions allows us to become more open to cultural diversity and to shape the practice of delivering health care in a positive manner.”



“When we engage in humanitarian efforts, we not only transmit our own expertise, but also learn a great deal too. We realize that we can accomplish so much with so little and how creativity is a key skill for every health care professional. It is inspiring; it changes our perspective on how medicine is practiced in developed countries.”



A vision integrated in its mission as a university hospital centre

With the wealth of experience it has gained over the recent years, the CHU Sainte-Justine has developed a five-year international relations plan with a structured vision to gain further international exposure and acquire new knowledge. Thanks to the results of its numerous collaborations, the CHU Sainte-Justine has integrated this vision as part of its mission to improve the health of mothers, children, and teenagers of Quebec.

This vision is a part of the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan and responds to the clinical, academic and research projects that were developed in 2007. The partnerships that have been established with the different targeted organizations will enable the establishment to achieve its four strategic directions more easily: to integrate patient care, education and research; to advance the network; to mobilize human resources; and to modernize its facilities and technology.

“... the CHU Sainte-Justine's desire to transform itself into a university hospital network committed to the transfer of expertise across the mother-child network will enable the establishment to gain further international exposure and to increase collaborations.”

Achieving this vision will be undertaken in a gradual manner by applying the strengths acquired by our internal teams from previous experiences and by developing formal partnership agreements with Quebec and Canadian institutions; international, governmental and non-governmental organizations; and private corporations.

Expected results for the next five years include the development of new knowledge through collaborative research programs; promotion of the establishment's expertise in the transfer of knowledge by developing

the virtual CHU for multilateral exchange; the establishment of clinical programs of excellence with the implementation of tertiary and quaternary care structures in partnering health care establishments; and the commercialization of Quebec's knowledge and expertise in the area of mother-child care with private corporations.

The projected outcomes of its international actions - direct, indirect and collateral - are to further advance the university hospital centre's reputation and attract ability; to mobilize human resources to improve employee attraction, retention and career development and to foster the exchange of profes-



sionals with its different partners; to create alternative sources of revenue; and to enhance Quebec's international position in the field of health care for mothers and children.

“The CHU Sainte-Justine is seeking to develop a work environment that acknowledges employees for their commitment and a workplace where they can advance their skills, participate in university-level activities, and shine in their area of expertise.”

A structured approach of implementation

The vision of the CHU Sainte-Justine's international relations is part of a structured process incorporating the methodology that the CHU has adopted for all its projects. Even though international relations constitutes a natural part of the CHU Sainte-Justine's mission, the management and financing of its international relations are treated differently from general hospital operations in order to ensure the resources required to meet and respect the needs of mothers and children of Quebec at all times.

In order to achieve this vision, an infrastructure had to be established in the first year, which resulted in the recruitment of an employee, the creation of an advisory committee and the setting up of office spaces dedicated to the CHU Sainte-Justine's international activities. The creation of such an infrastructure enabled the establishment to conduct a review of all its activities, funding sources, and partnerships.

Its international work is carried out under the three following axes: institutional, humanitarian, and trade. Some of its initiatives have already produced results as several international partnerships have been formally created while others are under way. For example, a partnership between

the CHU Sainte-Justine and the Canadian Red Cross was recently launched to develop an integrated health program for Haiti in collaboration with the Unité de santé internationale of the Université de Montréal, and the Direction de santé publique of the Agence de Montréal.

All results generated by its international actions are measured using the method of the balanced scorecard and are monitored by the International Relations Office.

The institutional, humanitarian and trade missions carried out by the CHU Sainte-Justine are maintained in constant synergy as to enable the establishment to achieve its objectives aimed at improving the health of mothers and children.

Its actions are guided by the humanitarian values deeply rooted in the institution by its founder, Justine Lacoste-Beaubien. Every action and every effort undertaken is carried out in humanity and respect for the expressed needs of mothers and children in a spirit of continued collaboration.



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Appendix 1: Mission Examples

Institutional Axis

International missions of an institutional nature most often fall under the scope of partnership agreements between two institutions. This type of agreement has existed between the CHU Sainte-Justine and other health institutions on different continents for years. These agreements consist in sending teams on site to conduct clinical interventions and to provide training. For example, a partnership between the CHU Sainte-Justine and Bonnes oeuvres du coeur, a Moroccan NGO, was signed in 2005 that led to a series of four missions from 2006 to 2010 of professionals to treat heart defects at the newly built humanitarian clinic in Casablanca. The agreement also consisted in hosting Moroccan doctors and health care professionals at the CHU Sainte-Justine for clinical training, deploying medical supplies (when possible) and organizing continued training via videoconferencing.

Clinical and administrative support is also sometimes offered at distance when technology permits. The CHU Sainte-Justine often receives doctors and health care professionals from Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America under partnership agreements for skill enhancement training. Such exchanges are an excellent way to attract and promote professionals of high caliber at the CHU Sainte-Justine.

Activities of the Réseau mère-enfant de la Francophonie (RMEF) also fall under the institutional axis. This network of twenty major university hospital centres from ten different countries strives to develop best practices in health management, research, education, and care. An annual conference and internship opportunities for health care professionals and administrators are organized each year.

Humanitarian Axis

Humanitarian missions are organized to improve the health of mothers and children in developing countries. For example, the CHU Sainte-Justine has been committed to Haiti for many years and this commitment is increasing every day. In the aftermath of the earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, the International Health and Adoption Clinic of the CHU Sainte-Justine, world recognized for its expertise, conducted examinations on and delivered care to a large number of children awaiting adoption. More recently, an important partnership agreement was signed during the launch of the Integrated Health Program for Haiti, an initiative led by the Canadian Red Cross in collaboration with the CHU Sainte-Justine, the Unité de santé internationale at the Université de Montréal, and the Direction de la santé publique of the Agence de Montréal. As part of the program, the CHU Sainte-Justine will collaborate in the reconstruction of Haiti's health facilities in the districts of the southeast and will deliver institutional support and skill enhancement training to health care professionals in these institutions in order to improve access to quality health services for mothers and children.

Many professionals at the CHU Sainte-Justine have been participating in humanitarian missions abroad for many years in Africa. For the past four years, the CHU Sainte-Justine has been organizing the Journée Lucille Teasdale, a conference to highlight all of the establishment's humanitarian work accomplished during the previous year.

Such humanitarian missions would not be possible without the much needed funding that, most often than not, comes from international trade missions.

Trade Axis

As a leader and expert in several specialty areas, from medical care and rehabilitation, management, construction, technology assessment, health promotion, network administration to research and teaching, the CHU Sainte-Justine is often called on to provide services in other countries within the scope of specific projects. These opportunities to promote its unique expertise on a broader scale are very beneficial for the institution, not only in terms of visibility and notoriety, but also in terms of financing, as they enable the funding of its humanitarian activities and support its technological advancements.