



# HBS Newsletter

Hôpital Bon Samaritain

Limbé, Haiti



Fall 2010

## Limbé – Acute Dysentery Infection - **CHOLERA**



HBS received its first patient of Acute Dysentery Infection on the 21 October 2010. In the days following we began to receive more patients with the same symptoms, all of them coming from the upper areas of 8<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Section of the Limbé Valley. HBS contacted MSPP and based on the reports of similar cases in the Artibonite Valley, the doctors believed that they were looking at an onset of epidemic in the North of Haiti. With the help of MSPP, AmeriCares, MSF, PAHO and others for supplies and staff, HBS has seen and treated over 300 patients from all over the Limbé Valley to where the epidemic has now spread. The mortality rate of about 6.5% is due in part to the slow response of the families to bring the patients to the hospital at the first sign of symptoms. HBS has in isolation on any given day between 50 and 80 patients.

MSPP and the CDC have determined that this epidemic is Cholera, continuance of a pandemic which broke out 49 years ago in Indonesia and is spreading worldwide. Cholera is an acute infectious disease of the small intestine with symptoms of profuse watery diarrhea, vomiting causing severe dehydration. Without treatment death can occur within hours. The cholera bacterium is found in water or food that was contaminated by feces. Cholera is usually found in areas with inadequate water treatment and poor sanitation. Cholera is extremely contagious as it is spread through contaminated water and food or through human to human contact. The disease is easily treatable through rehydration techniques and antibiotics providing the patients arrive within the early stages. The potable water system maintained in Limbé by HBS has definitely slowed down the spread of the disease within the town limits. The CDC expects this epidemic to last for more than a year in Haiti.



HBS urgently needs help of volunteer doctors, nurses and other medical staff. The doctors, nurses and staff at HBS are performing a heroic effort but are stretched thin. Due to the nature of the illness and that the patients were coming from the poorest levels of society, HBS decided that, as with our TB and the Diabetic programs, these epidemic victims would be taken care of at no cost to them. Though HBS is receiving donated supplies to be able to take care of the increasing number of cholera patients, HBS needs operating funds to hire more staff, pay transport costs, reinforce isolation techniques and provide proper hygiene to meet the challenges of this epidemic while maintaining the rest of the hospital operational for the other patients. Please donate towards this cause so HBS will be able to continue to help save the many Haitian lives directly affected by this epidemic.



## Container/Generator Housing Shipped !

Since the earthquake we have been receiving donations for HBS including two much needed replacement generators, one from a friend in Canada and the other from our friends at the Catholic Foundation For Eastern South Dakota. The BroadCrown generators were ordered out of England and finally arrived at the Port of Miami in September ready to be transshipped. We purchased a used shipping container, like we did in 2006, which will be converted to the motor housing to back up the two generators that have been running nonstop for the last 8 years.

Shawn Hodges was in Florida for about two weeks to help purchase badly needed replacement parts and appliances for the hospital including essential tools to keep HBS maintained. On October 5<sup>th</sup> the container was dropped off at our

warehouse in Lake Worth. All the generous donated supplies such as rolled bandages, clothes, toys and medical supplies were loaded into the container. We also included the remaining new mattresses for the pediatric and adult wards which were donated by our friends in Canada. It took us 2 full days to load the container.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> October the container was picked up and taken to a bonded warehouse in Miami to load the 2 generators and then taken to the port. The container landed in Haiti last month. The Government of Haiti has graciously signed off on the customs exemption and we are awaiting the release from customs this week.

Many thanks to everyone who made this shipment possible. Anyone that would like to help defray the cost of the container, transport and setup in Limbé, please put container in the memo.



## Albentz Meme

Albentz is the grandson of the Eleuther, our driver for the hospital since many years. Albentz started complaining of pain right above his right eye when watching a live soccer match. Everyone thought he hit his head during the game but Albentz said nothing happened.

Shortly after his initial complaints his right eye got very swollen. The family went to see an eye doctor in Cap Haitian who put him on allergy medicine. Unfortunately the swelling did not go away but progressed to the top of his head. The doctors at HBS got very concerned and hospitalized him. They gave him a wide spectrum of IV antibiotics. The swelling was

caused by pus and required a daily drainage which was extremely painful. We are appreciative for the doctors at Hopital Crudem who also helped us with this case. It took two weeks of antibiotics for the infection to clear and then another week for the swelling above his eye to go away. He is better now and back to playing soccer.

Happy Thanksgiving!