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Editorial

The Need for Cardiac Surgery Missions in Gabon

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Editorial

Cardio-vascular diseases have a significant and increasing surgical burden, particularly rheumatic heart diseases and congenital heart diseases in Gabon [1,2].

Currently with about 20 cardiologists, cardiovascular surgeons in training, three thoracic surgeons, two cardiac anesthesiologists fully trained and two cardiac anesthesiologists still in training, the cardiothoracic and vascular surgery team is incomplete. Challenges are also related to lack of training staff such as perfusionists, technician anesthetists, physiotherapists and inalhotherapists and difficulties getting consumables.

The need for cardiac surgery is increasing. As well as countries like Senegal and Ghana where cardiac surgery started with cardiac surgery humanitarian missions, to conduct procedures ranging from moderate to big complexity, everyone must create a mission culture [3,4].

Without this support, most cardiac patients are left to fend for themselves and are treated medically; a smaller percentage still travel outside of Gabon for surgery [5].

Tough having a universal health care insurance for most of the population, Gabon remains a developing country. There is an ineffective healthcare system, and many people cannot afford even the most basic medical care [2,5,6].

Many people who require cardiac surgery are left in despair. Therefore, free and subsidized cardiac missions ought to be an essential component of the healthcare system, helping the less fortunate and giving people a second chance at life [5].

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Once everyone has implemented the culture of open-heart surgery missions, doctors will be able to think about being independent with the collaboration of the government and other partners to supply with funding, human resources, consumables, drugs, equipment, infrastructures and training program.

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Footnote

Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflict of interest declare.

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