



Working for Secours Dentaire International?

Introduction and Philosophy

« Secours Dentaire International » (SDI) [Dental-Aid International] is an organization independent of any religious nor political activity. Its work focuses exclusively on technical cooperation, the training of local personnel, and the monitoring of dental activities in the regions concerned. SDI is convinced that only a dental prophylaxis policy implemented in schools will, in the long term and at lower cost, sustainably reduce oral health problems around the world. For this reason, prophylaxis programs are generally established alongside the treatments provided in dental clinics. Dental clinics and laboratories, as well as prevention programs, are managed by local staff. These teams receive support from volunteer coordinators (medical dentists and dental hygienists) from Switzerland and other European countries.

The main objective of SDI is to guide existing dental clinics and laboratories toward autonomous management and sustainable self-financing as quickly as possible. In principle, SDI does not plan to open new clinics. However, over the past decade, several new facilities have been integrated into the infrastructures supported by the organization.

As prophylaxis programs remain one of our key priorities, we continue to actively seek sponsors and committed partners. In addition, we are constantly looking for new European collaborators, particularly dentists, dental hygienists, and dental technicians, who wish to contribute their skills to our activities.

Required Training and Desired Profile

We are looking for collaborators with at least two years of professional experience after graduation. In the countries where SDI operates, medical dentists are often confronted with pathological situations that are far more complex than those encountered in Europe. A certain level of experience is therefore essential in order to carry out the teaching missions entrusted to them in an appropriate and responsible manner. We are also interested in collaborating with dental hygienists. They work mainly in the field of oral prophylaxis, particularly through prevention and education programs conducted in schools. These European collaborators generally travel together with the project coordinators. In addition, dental technicians are engaged to provide continuing education for local technicians. This training focuses primarily on the design and production of removable resin prostheses.

However, we do not recruit dental assistants or trainee dentists. Indeed, our mission in the countries where we are active is above all to transfer skills to local personnel and to ensure technical cooperation in the field of dentistry.

Monitoring of the Various Projects

Dental clinics staffed with trained local personnel operate autonomously throughout the year. Each project benefits from the support of one or more coordinators who carry out, on average, a 10- to 15-day mission every two years. These visits aim, on the one hand, to ensure the continuing education of local staff and, on the other hand, to oversee the maintenance and repair of dental equipment. In parallel with their field missions, coordinators are also involved in Europe in the administrative tasks related to the projects, including correspondence, shipping equipment and materials, seeking funding, and fundraising.

Interested in Volunteering?

Every autumn, SDI organizes a seminar bringing together the majority of the project coordinators. An important part of this meeting is dedicated to presenting the different local realities of the supported projects: number of patients treated daily, equipment needs, replacement or repair of equipment, development of local teams, prophylaxis activities in schools, etc. This exchange platform is a particularly enriching experience and provides a concrete understanding of the work carried out in the field as well as the commitment of SDI collaborators. If you are interested in collaborating with SDI, we strongly encourage you to attend the next autumn seminar. The date of this event is listed on the website under the « EVENTS » - « Seminars » section.

To receive information regarding the next seminar, please send a message including your motivation letter and curriculum vitae to Jürg Jent (j.jent(at)famjent.ch). Your contact details will be recorded, and the seminar documentation (program and registration form) will be sent to you in due course.

Remarks

In recent years, access to certain projects has become more difficult due to changes in local political contexts and various country-specific constraints. These situations may occasionally complicate travel and the monitoring of field activities.