In a previous issue of CJHP I described my experience as a volunteer at Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in 1997. Cambodia is one of the most medically neglected countries in the world. As dramatized in the movie “The Killing Fields”, Pol Pot, the leader of the notorious Khmer Rouge guerrilla army, ordered a genocide that eventually took approximately 2 million lives, one-seventh of the country’s population. Most of the people executed during his 3 1/2-year reign were the educated, the skilled, former government workers, and those with foreign experience. It was reported that when the Vietnamese ousted the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979, only 4 doctors and 7 pharmacists had survived the mass murders.

A lack of education, medical care, government institutions, and social infrastructure were the result of 3 decades of social and political unrest. Poverty, malnutrition, poor education, and illness represent the cycle that the Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE is trying to break, by giving people access to reliable, free health care. Therefore, the goal of the hospital from its opening in December 1996 has been to provide a homegrown clinical training ground where Cambodian nationals can learn to meet these needs.

When I was at the Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE in March 1997, the hospital had been in operation for only 4 months. At that time it served solely ambulatory patients, who would line up as early as dawn, some coming from distant provinces as word travelled about the free, high-quality, compassionate care provided at the hospital. The outpatient clinic was only open on weekdays from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. In the first quarter of 1997 more than 14 000 patients were treated, including over 5600 during the month I was there. The pharmacy staff consisted of a pharmacy manager from the Philippines and 4 Cambodian nationals, of whom 2 were pharmacists.

In 1997, Sandra Tsai travelled to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to volunteer her services in the pharmacy department of the newly established Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE. A crowd of 300 to 450 people gather there daily to receive free medical care. Pictured here are some patients coming out of the hospital. The front of the hospital also serves as a triage center, where vital signs are checked and recorded, and a brief diagnosis is made of each patient’s state of health. The patients are then seen in 1 of the 9 outpatient stations or, for the most serious cases, are admitted to the medical ward.

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Since that time, the hospital has flourished. The outpatient facility has established specialty clinics for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and HIV/AIDS, to improve patient care and to provide

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bénévole ou non, augmenter. Cette situation a contraint de nombreux membres à reconsidérer leur adhésion à une organisation volontaire. Les avantages traditionnels ne suffiront plus à satisfaire les besoins de la nouvelle génération de pharmaciens. Des incitatifs ingénieux et de nouveaux projets seront nécessaires pour attirer et conserver les membres.

Pour relever ces défis et pour réussir à offrir des services de qualité à valeur ajoutée, un sondage à l’intention des membres de la SCPH sera posté à tous les membres cet automne. Voilà l’occasion de nous dire ce que la SCPH peut faire pour vous et pour la profession, de sorte qu’elle puisse continuer à être le porte-étendard de la pharmacie hospitalière. Vos commentaires sont essentiels au succès et à la pérennité de la SCPH. Je vous invite à prendre quelques minutes pour répondre au sondage. Par votre participation, vous contribuerez à façonner les services aux membres et la Société de demain.

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References