



## Visiting Educator Program

**Building capacity and a supply of trained doctors in some of the most underserved regions of the world**

*“The long-term goal of Interplast’s Visiting Educator Program is to move a site toward medical independence and self-sufficiency so that every child living in poverty has free access to the safest and highest-quality care—now and in the future.”*

— Dr. Scott Corlew, Interplast’s Chief Medical Officer

**Each year, Interplast teaches 600 medical professionals overseas to perform surgeries safely, effectively and efficiently on their own.** One surgeon in a developing country could potentially perform thousands of life-changing surgeries in his/her lifetime.

Interplast’s Visiting Educator Program sends teams of volunteer surgeons, nurses and other medical professionals to developing countries to provide direct, hands-on training for local doctors and nurses in various topics of medicine and surgery. They provide training in advanced forms of reconstructive plastic surgery—such as hand surgery, microsurgery, advanced cleft techniques and burn reconstruction—as well as in anesthesia, nursing and speech and physical therapy.

Multiple factors (difficult admissions, high financial cost and language barriers) make it difficult for medical professionals from abroad to come to the United States for advanced training in reconstructive surgery. The Visiting Educator Program delivers education and training where it is needed. It provides educational opportunities to increase the skill levels of its international partners and looks to them to define their communities’ needs and collaborate in setting goals and objectives.

**The goal is to increase sustainable, year-round medical care for those with clefts, disabling burns and hand injuries. Interplast believes local empowerment is the best long-term answer for providing quality reconstructive surgery to children living in poverty in developing countries.**

Each workshop is one week long and provides training in a variety of ways: hands-on (doing actual surgical cases), lectures, educational materials and question-and-answer sessions. Interplast relies on the concept of teaching surgeries through observation, but most especially through hands-on training during actual operations. This method assures our international medical partners’ success in learning and performing new skills.

Moreover, training does not stop when the visiting educators return home. Innovative web-based technology allows for surgery training to continue after the Visiting Educator workshop. It also allows future cases to be reviewed for quality and safety assurances by experienced volunteer surgeons in the United States and Canada.

Interplast’s Visiting Educator Program is creating virtual teaching hospitals around the world by sending experts in surgery, anesthesia and other crucial topics to the most important audience: surgeons and doctors working in their own communities to benefit the poor. The Visiting Educator Program has sent between one and six medical specialty educators overseas on each of its 78 trips since 2001.

**Interplast plans to send 20 teams of volunteer medical educators to 12 countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Peru, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Zambia) during the 2007-2008 fiscal year.**

*Interplast—the first humanitarian organization to provide free reconstructive surgery for children with clefts, disabling burns and hand injuries—has provided 68,000 life-changing surgeries for those who have no other access to care. Working in underserved regions of 16 countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America, Interplast teaches, empowers and partners with volunteers and overseas medical professionals so every child living in poverty has free access to the safest and highest-quality care—now and in the future. Interplast is committed to transforming as many lives as possible, allocating 90 percent of its budget to medical programs.*

For more information, visit [www.interplast.org](http://www.interplast.org) or call 650.962.0123.