



# Grace!

SPRING 2005

AT WORK IN HAITI & THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**"...I will bring health and healing...I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security."  
(Jeremiah 33:6 NIV)**



## International Partnerships Help Advance HIV Treatment at Grace Children's Hospital

For over ten years Grace Children's Hospital has been bringing medical and psycho-social support to patients living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). However, February marked an exciting transition as critical Anti-Retroviral (ARV) treatment services were inaugurated at Grace in partnership with the Ministry of Health, HS2007 (a division of USAID), the Center for Disease Control and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. These partners will provide the funding for International Child Care to **diagnose, treat** and **monitor** children and adults who are infected with HIV using World Health Organization guidelines.

For nearly 40 years, International Child Care's greatest reputation has been in the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis (TB). ICC is the leading non-governmental organization working with the Haitian Ministry of Health in the planning and execution of a national TB control program. Due to the fact that HIV infection is the most potent risk factor for developing tuberculosis and that TB is the most common cause of death in HIV positive persons, offering Anti-Retroviral treatment services is a natural extension of ICC's ongoing work. Access to HIV treatment will have a significant effect on International Child Care's success in the control of tuberculosis in Haiti.

HIV infection is the greatest health crisis our world faces today. Intimate exposure to this retrovirus causes a chronic infection which leads to gradual destruction of the human immune system and ultimately, Acquired

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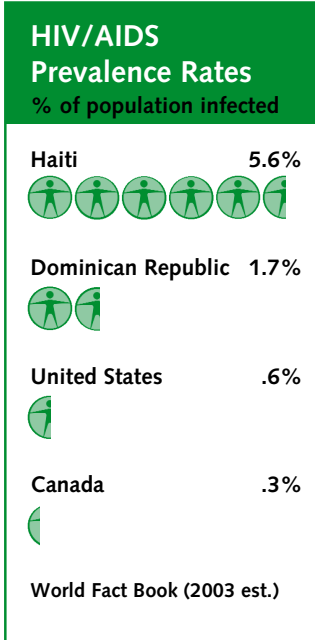


Photo © Keith Murma

In 2004 Prèsandieu Hyppolite, just 32 years old, was brought to ICC's clinic in Port Margot suffering from an undiagnosed illness. At first it was thought he had contracted malaria or typhoid fever, but once those viruses were ruled out the ICC nurse suspected Prèsandieu may have contracted HIV/AIDS. Thanks to new funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria ICC is now able to diagnose, treat and monitor HIV infected children and adults, like Prèsandieu, through Anti-Retroviral (ARV) treatment services.

## Did You Know?

- HIV/AIDS and TB are two of the most urgent public health problems in Haiti
- HIV/AIDS and TB are linked – to effectively fight one, you have to fight the other.
- At least one in three people with HIV will develop TB
- People who are HIV+ are 30 - 50 times more likely to develop active TB
- TB is more active and communicable in HIV+ individuals
- TB is more likely to be fatal if undiagnosed and untreated in HIV+ people

▲▲ **The AIDS epidemic and the TB epidemic are locked in a vicious circle of mutual reinforcement. We can unlock them with a dual strategy of TB control and HIV prevention.** ▼▼

**Peter Piot -  
Executive Director  
UNAIDS**

## Grace Children's Hospital is a Center of Hope and Healing for People Living with HIV/AIDS

Since 1994 Grace Children's Hospital has provided psycho-social assistance to over 900 Haitian's living with HIV/AIDS through an established counseling program. For these people, many of whom live in abject poverty and have been rejected by family and friends, Grace is a center of hope and healing where they receive not only counseling, but also nutritious food, health care and the support of others who face the same struggles.

Due to the link between tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, health education on the prevention and spread of HIV is a main objective for the staff in the outpatient TB clinic. HIV education is also deemed a priority at the reproductive health/family planning outpatient clinic. Patients at these clinics are automatically screened and referred, if need be, to Grace Children's Hospital's HIV/AIDS counseling service.

Prior to the recent funding from PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief, through HS2007 (a division of USAID), and the Center for Disease Control, Grace Children's Hospital could only facilitate pre-testing for patients suspected of having HIV/AIDS. The healthcare staff at the hospital would interview the patients and provide general information on HIV/AIDS prior to referring them to another facility for definitive test results. Once tested, the patients would then return to Grace Children's Hospital for a follow-up visit. If they tested negative for HIV the patient was scheduled for a re-test in three months, but if they tested positive, the patient was provided with condoms, counseling and enrolled in a support group at the hospital.

Support groups, consisting of twenty members each, meet biweekly to give patients an opportunity to share their experiences, receive assistance and counsel, participate in community motivation and receive health education from trained social workers. When a patient misses their regular counseling appointment at the hospital, the social workers will do a home visit to check up on them. The hospital also offers support services to the patients' sexual partners and families. ●



**Chantal Gracien, a social worker who has worked at Grace Children's Hospital since 1994, is monitoring the weight of an HIV+ patient with the assistance of an ICC nurse.**



**Donate online at  
[www.intlchildcare.org](http://www.intlchildcare.org)**

Photo © Keith Mumma

*Excerpts from the speech by Dr. Harry Geffrard, ICC/Haiti General Director, at the inaugural ceremony for Anti-Retroviral treatment services at Grace Children's Hospital on February 3, 2005.*



Dear Guests,

ICC is honored by your presence at this ceremony. Your presence here today is an indication of your interest in this inaugural ceremony of Grace Children's Hospital's acceptance of the role of care provider for HIV patients. The staff and the medical management team, headed by Dr. Vilme [Director of Grace Children's Hospital] have over the past months given their best to develop strategies leading to the integration of the new services of ARV [Anti-Retroviral treatment] with existing services at Grace Children's Hospital, such as TB clinics, general consultations, pre-natal and gynecological clinics...

Less than 30 years ago HIV appeared on the world scene. It touches all parts of the world, all sexes, social strata, famous or anonymous people. Scientific achievements have allowed us to describe the disease causing agent, its transmission modes and preventative measures. Thanks to aggressive public education campaigns targeting high risk populations or groups and the implementation of specific preventative measures, the spread of the epidemic has been reversed in many countries, but the disease remains a non-curable one, killing its victims sooner or later. Finally, medication has been manufactured. Even though it does not provide a definitive cure, medication controls the disease and adds a number of years and a certain quality to the life of the patients who have access to it.

The sensational event that brings us together today is that Grace Children's Hospital finally has access to these extraordinary medications that will be provided free of charge to the patients, providing they pledge to cooperate with us for the success of the proposed treatment...



**Mrs. Pamela Callen, the Representative of the American Ambassador, addresses the assembly.**



**From left front, Dr. Harry Geffrard and notable representatives Paul Auxila and Dr. Florence Guillaume, from HS2007, and Pamela Callen, from the American Embassy, attend the ARV inaugural ceremony at Grace Children's Hospital.**

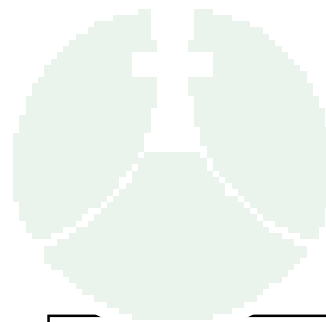
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Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). In 2003 there were over five million new cases of AIDS, 700,000 of which were children. Today 2.5 million of the world's children are infected and 580,000 die annually. Hundreds of thousands more are left orphaned each year by the deaths of infected parents.

In Haiti it is estimated that 5.6% of the population are HIV infected with about half being women. Among adolescents and adults, the predominant route of transmission is through heterosexual contact. Almost all pediatric HIV transmission is passed from infected mothers to their newborns and occurs during pregnancy, labor, delivery or through breastfeeding. It does not take sophisticated math to estimate the horrible impact of HIV infection on Haiti's children when so many women are infected!

Haiti's children are very vulnerable to the HIV virus and progression to early disease is common. In 2004, HIV tests were positive in 7% of the children admitted to Grace Children's Hospital. Early signs and symptoms of infection are non-specific and include growth failure, swollen lymph nodes, persistent fevers, chronic diarrhea and cough. If left untreated, 30% may die before their first birthday and 60% by the time they reach the age of five most commonly from opportunistic diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhea, malnutrition and tuberculosis.

Although access to ARV therapy does not cure the HIV infection, it can relieve suffering, decrease infectivity and give children and adults years of productive life. Through the new ARV treatment services at Grace Children's Hospital health and hope will be restored for hundreds of Haitian children and their families. ●



Leave a legacy of health and hope...become a member of the

*Boundless Grace Society*  
by making a planned gift.

Call the ICC/USA office at  
1-800-722-4453 or  
ICC/Canada at  
1-888-722-4453 to learn more  
about planned giving opportunities.

## Newslines –

### ICC Awarded 4.5 Million from The Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

International Child Care has been awarded 4.5 million over a five year period to develop a TB/HIV program. Funds to provide critical anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment services for children and adults infected with HIV come from PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Fund for Aids Relief. In the words of ICC/Haiti General Director Dr. Harry Geffard, *"This is the opportunity for our physicians and all the medical staff to offer a better quality of life to those people for whom the HIV infection represented a sentence of death."*

The Global Fund is a unique global public-private partnership aimed at attracting and disbursing resources to prevent and treat three of the world's most devastating diseases AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria. This partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities represents a new approach to international health financing. The Global Fund relies on local ownership and planning to ensure that new resources are directed to programs on the frontline of this global effort, reaching those most in need. Currently, Dr. Geffard and his staff are busy opening four additional offices throughout Haiti and hiring twenty new employees to assist with this exciting initiative. ●



*Grace!*

*Grace!* is published quarterly for friends of International Child Care. ICC is a Christian health agency working in Haiti and the Dominican Republic to change conditions which make people sick, hungry, unemployed and afraid.

ICC depends on individuals, churches, and donor agencies for the financial means to serve. A response card and envelope are enclosed for your contributions. Your gift will be receipted for income tax purposes.

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UMCOR Advance Projects:

Grace Children's Hospital: 418520-7  
Integrated Community Health (Haiti): 418847-3  
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