



MISERICORDIA
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Media Release

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Winnipeg ophthalmologist performs first corneal transplant in Jimma, Ethiopia

School is back in session and everyone's busily writing their **How I spent my summer holidays** essay.

Here at Misericordia, we don't actually ask staff to provide accounts of their holidays. But if we did, there is no doubt ophthalmologist Dr. Stephen Brodovsky would take top honours with: **My trip to Ethiopia**.

Inspired by a former colleague, Dr. Brodovsky hopped on a plane with a box of donor cornea – getting through security is another story entirely – and the intent to make a difference in a developing country. The trip was organized by Orbis, a global non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating avoidable blindness worldwide.

"The Ethiopian surgeons had the knowledge and the skills to practice," says Dr. Brodovsky, "They just lacked some basic equipment and the training."

And training is exactly what Dr. Brodovsky, who specializes in corneal diseases, offered. He assisted an Ethiopian ophthalmologist, Dr. Elias Hailu, perform the first corneal transplant at the Jimma University Hospital and supervised four subsequent cases. Dr. Brodovsky also performed seven cataract surgery operations during his volunteer trip.

Ethiopia has just opened its first Eye Bank and the newly trained surgeons are beginning to treat patients. Nearly one million Ethiopians are blind and an estimated additional three to four million are visually impaired.

"It's astounding," says Dr. Brodovsky. "There are only four corneal transplant surgeons in the whole country. We have four here at Misericordia's Eye Care Centre of Excellence."

Since 1898, Misericordia Health Centre has been providing compassionate high quality health care to those most in need in accordance with our core values: caring, respect and trust. Misericordia provides an array of specialized programs including our Eye Care Centre of Excellence, long-term and interim care, urgent care, ambulatory clinics, diagnostic imaging, laboratory services and pediatric dental surgery. Misericordia is also home to the internationally recognized Provincial Health Contact Centre, including Health Links-Info Santé. For more information, please visit our website at www.misericordia.mb.ca.

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Note to Editors:

A selection of high-resolution photos and cutlines available upon request

