

Haiti a Year Later

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January 12, 2011 marked the one-year anniversary of the earthquake that devastated Port au Prince, Haiti,

and which continues to impact the lives of millions.

In the early days after the disaster, ASA and many of its members rallied to provide whatever was needed.

ASA established partnerships with most of the major relief organizations on the grounds in Haiti, and these relationships continue today. Our work was coordinated with the American College of Surgeons, and much more will be done with this collaboration in the coming year. These efforts were recognized by the

Communitas Award www.communitasawards.com, an independent organization that honors groups exhibiting excellence in community service and social responsibility.

Sadly, the whole of Haiti remains in a chronic state of humanitarian crisis. The Cholera epidemic that has swept the country has taken thousands of lives and has mobilized more resources for acute treatment of those infected and has reminded



us of what needs to be done to ensure a clean water supply. Few of the millions of dollars raised within the Clinton-Bush Fund have made it to on-the-ground programs or to rebuilding much of the critical infrastructure so desperately needed. The rate-limiting steps are the ground-level assessments needed to responsibly plan the rebuilding and the stability of the government to limit corruption and the potential for the funds



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never reaching those most in need. Haiti completed a national election in late November 2010, but the nation's leadership remains uncertain.

In spite of the ongoing tragedy and disappointing pace of the rebuilding, many members of the ASA remain involved and committed to providing assistance to those in need in Haiti.

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The number of patients in need of amputation care has never before been reported following a disaster. There are needs for ongoing stump revisions, wound infection debridement and the treatment of chronic pain. As well, with the devastation

of many hospitals, the many deaths of health care workers and physicians and the unmet emergency and essential surgical needs are growing. The future of health in Haiti is uncertain, as many medical and nursing students have lost mentors, libraries and the very buildings where they once studied.

The ASA Committee on Global Humanitarian Outreach (GHO) continues to monitor the anesthesia crisis in Haiti. We welcome ongoing reporting, stories and photos from the membership volunteering in Haiti at www.asahq.org/gho/Haiti-Relief.aspx. With your input, the ASA GHO Committee can identify what has been most effective in terms of our response and what needs continue to be unmet. The GHO is also researching sustainable support for the anesthesia residents and anesthesiologists of Haiti, and we are considering a library of lectures and an electronic library to enhance the education of those in training and in need of educational support.

Haiti is a close neighbor and in need of our ongoing and committed support. Please stay tuned for ways you can become involved at the GHO website www.asahq.org/GHO.

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