

Rotary Pentangular Project JPP4 Saint Quentin
PROJECT AIMING TO HELP THE PATIENT CARE OF DEAF CHILDREN IN MOLDAVIA
Update 23.7.19

Background

The programme for deaf and hard of hearing children is run by 'ONG Paediatricians of the World' in Moldavia has been running for twenty years. To start with, 500 deaf children were equipped with hearing aids by teams, thanks to help from the EU and the French Foreign Ministry.

The children benefitted from a standard hearing aid provided by the (French) Ministry of Health. After a few exploratory missions, a medical plan (consisting of family doctors, ORL, surgical materials etc, screening of children with chronic earache etc.) and a pedagogical approach (consisting of speech therapists and sign language teachers, provision of educational materials) has been offered.

The main objective of the programme now for 'Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Moldavia' is to develop an improved and more efficient multi-disciplinary system of care for the children and their families in order to allow them to make the most of their lives within their family, at school and later on in society.

Principal Aims:

Moldavia is by far the poorest country in Europe. In Moldavia there are officially 1850 deaf children and 80 – 90 children are diagnosed with degrees of deafness each year. There are numerous reasons for this, including the use of incorrect antibiotics. Fortunately, deafness caused by the use of antibiotics has decreased this past decade, thanks to efforts by 'Paediatricians of the World' to train paediatricians and family doctors.

Medical Aims:

Diagnosis of deafness often comes much too late. Many more properly qualified multi-disciplinary medical teams are required in order to provide care as early as possible to the children in Moldavia.

Publicity campaigns are required to encourage the buying and allocating of cochlear implants, for instance. The follow ups of first medical care, hearing aids etc. and education on these matters is currently still very irregular.

Educational Aims

Early intervention is very little developed in Moldavia. A deaf child obviously needs specialised help to develop its language and communication skills. All studies have shown that language levels are higher the younger a child acquires them, whether sign language or spoken language, thanks to hearing aids and cochlear implants etc.

What happens is that deaf children are sent to the nearest schools without any early intervention and they become isolated, their parents can't cope, teachers can't manage as well as they would with specialised help.

The profoundly deaf kids are the ones that are the most problematical.

Essentially, money is required to provide professionals to help these children – not just specialised medical care, but also proper plans for their education in order that they are helped to enter society and have a decent life.

Paediatricians of the World has been buying hearing aids etc. equipment for deaf children plus educational materials, but things constantly need updating.

In order to help these children considerable funds are required to provide for their specialised care – medical, educational, speech therapists. This will enable the children to lead more fulfilling lives, taking their proper place in society – something that many of them can only dream of now.

For twenty years Paediatricians of the World has been buying educational materials, audio – hearing equipment, equipment for classrooms to help deaf children, hearing aids and for the past few years batteries for the hearing aids.

Paediatricians of the World has also tried to train more teachers of sign language in Moldavia, thanks mainly to a team from the University of Grenoble.

Much is being done, but much more is required.

Paediatricians of the World **now wish to purchase:**

Amplification equipment (personal and group) for classes of deaf children.

Educational material.

Improvement in the audio phonic equipment for children in Chisinau.

Create Moldavian basic sign language videos for pre-school deaf and hard of hearing children mainly at home. Nine out of ten deaf children have parents who can hear and communication thanks to baby – signing can only improve communication between the child and members of his family.

Paediatricians of the World wishes to take action on:

- Improvement of early diagnosis of deafness in Moldavia
- Provision of specialised multi-disciplinary teams.
- The organisation of early intervention for children of less than three years.
- An improvement of and better organisation of early education (pre-school) for deaf children.
- Training of specialised professionals - doctors, specialised teachers, psychologists etc.
- Help the education of children who have already benefitted from cochlear implants.
- Provide the tools for diversified specialised teams.