

Kenya Smiles is an oral health awareness campaign grant funded by donations from the Rotary Club -District 5160 of California, USA. The grant was written by Dr. Sheila Hurst, an educationist. In the implementing team for this grant is the immediate past Governor of the Rotary Club District 5160 (California) Governor Laura Day and a past Governor Karl Diekman.

The grant has several components to it namely:

1. Vocational Training
2. Nutrition education
3. Oral health education

The Grant managers partnered with the Kenya Dental Association for the oral health education component. During discussions with KDA Council, the idea of sending six dentists representing a wide range of backgrounds was agreed on. Consequently, Dr. Regina Mutave, current Chair of the Department of Periodontology/ Community and Preventive Dentistry was nominated as part of the team of six to represent institutions involved in the training of dental health care personnel in the country. The exchange team of renowned Dental, Medical Professionals and key Rotary leaders from the USA is visiting Kenya for interactive sessions with Kenyan dental Professionals.

The principal, College of Health Sciences was at hand to receive the guests at the School of Dental Sciences. During the meeting held in the Schools Board room, the visiting team made donations of various dental equipment and materials including a portable Aseptico Dental mobile operatory, light cure composite and amalgam restorative materials, denture teeth, burs, a light cure machine, assorted forceps, endodontic files and orthodontic instruments.

The grant has purchased and will distribute to about 5,000 children backpacks with oral health starter kit of a toothbrush and toothpaste. The back pack is also expected to contain literature to help educate the public on oral diseases as well as a collapsible cup for the children to rinse their mouths after meals. These will be distributed to selected primary schools in the country by the team during their visit in Nairobi and Meru.

Visiting dental professionals will also participate in the Continuing Dental Education to be provided to dentists within this period. During their visit also, it is expected that long-term sustainable solutions for oral health can be discussed including possible University collaborations to help with staff development.

A total of ten visitors are in the country for the next two weeks. Among them are:-

1. Dr. Sheila Hurst ó Project leader, Kenya Smiles and a Rotarian
2. Laura Hurst ó Governor, Rotary Club District 5160
3. Karl Diekman ó Past Governor, Rotary Club District 5160
4. Karen Sokal-Gutierrez MD, MPH, Associate Clinical professor, UC Berkely-UCSF Joint Medical Program. School of Public Health, University of California, Berkely.
5. Mark Roseman BS, DDS, CAGS, Diplomat American Board Pediatric Dentistry. Associate Professor Pediatric Dentistry, European University Colleg, Dubai. UAE

6. Maureen Valley DMD, MPH, MS. Associate Professor and Clinical director ó University of Pacific, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry.
7. James Green DDS. Dentist in private practice
8. Brian Kendall ó Owner, Kendall Concepts Media Production Company
9. Janet Kendall- Owner, Kendall Concepts
10. Peter Henry BA, MS. Consultant, Business Solutions

The current visit is therefore a mission to fulfill the above grant. The participation of the University of Nairobi will see relations cemented and open possibilities of collaboration with the Rotary Club as a partner, as well as the Universities that have sent their personnel on this mission. Opportunities of writing a joint grant with the two universities represented in the visiting team seem feasible.