

33rd Euro Nursing & Medicare Summit

October 08-10, 2018 | Edinburgh, Scotland

Innovative health care project-cochlear implants and bone-anchored hearing aid surgeries in Armenia

Salpy Akaragian

Armenian International Medical Fund, USA

The Armenian International Medical (AIM) Fund was founded in 2003 as a critical component of the master plan to advance health care in Armenia. Its mission is to create and implement innovative health care programs for the Armenian people. In 2004, AIM Fund launched its cochlear implant program and sent its inaugural team of medical, nursing and support staff to implant a four-year-old child--the first surgery of its kind on Armenian soil. The organization's success is due to a group of dedicated and highly skilled medical, nursing and other health care professionals. The medical team is led by Dr. Akira Ishiyama, a Professor and Otologist Surgeon at David Geffen UCLA Medical School and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in Head and Neck and, Dr. Arthur Shukuryan, Professor and Director of Head & Neck at Erebouni Medical Center. The team is also supported by highly skilled anesthesiologists, audiologists, nurses, device programmers, speech therapists and other health care professionals. Today, over 100 children and young adults have been implanted and four children have received bone-anchored hearing aid (BAHA) device. The success rate of the surgeries has been 100%. The recipients of the device are now able to hear, speak, learn and attend regular schools. Armenia is on the map as the cochlear implant Regional Center in the Caucasus. This presentation will highlight the key elements and infrastructure of the project, stake holders, financial implications and, share with you challenges and opportunities of the project.

Biography

Salpy Akaragian has completed her PhD at University of California, Los Angeles. She is the Founder and President of Armenian International Medical Fund and Former Director of UCLA Health's International Nursing Program and Nurse Credentialing. She has received many local, national and international awards. She has served on the California Board of Registered Nursing as a Board Member and was a Magnet Appraiser for American Nurse Credentialing Committee. In June 2018, after 44 years of Nursing Career, she has retired at UCLA Health. Her continuous conducting international research and projects, and serves as a consultant to Ministry of Health of Armenia.

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