

## HelpMeSee brings the technology of flight simulators to surgical training

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HelpMeSee, a non-profit organization committed to ending the global health crisis of cataract blindness through high scale simulator-based training, organized a series of events at the Comprehensive Cataract Conference 2017 (CCC 2017), that took place in Chennai from 1<sup>st</sup> December to 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

The events were jointly organized by The International Society of Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgeons (ISMSICS) in association with HelpMeSee and included demonstrations of HelpMeSee's simulation-based training program to address the shortage of well-trained cataract specialists worldwide.

CCC 2017 was attended by hundreds of experts in cataract surgery, who shared insights and experiences in providing quality cataract care. HelpMeSee's global team presented solutions that supported surgical training and patient safety. Both HelpMeSee and ISMSICS strongly supported Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery (MSICS), a high quality, quick, and low cost solution to end cataract blindness and treat visual impairment throughout the developing world.

During the three-day conference, HelpMeSee hosted two scientific symposiums on "The fundamentals of simulation-based training in MSICS" and "Technology-driven community-based approach to cataract patient care to eliminate cataract blindness." Representatives from HelpMeSee provided attendees with hands-on demonstrations of its virtual reality Eye Surgical Simulator developed to rapidly scale training of high-skilled cataract specialists.

Mr. James Tyler Ueltschi, who is the co-founder and chairman of HelpMeSee and who is also the driving force behind HelpMeSee said "My father was involved in flight safety and high fidelity simulators are used in aviation industry all the time. We are bringing the technology of flight simulators and advanced training methods to surgical training and medical practice. The goal is to train cataract specialists in months instead of years." He further states that "With this simulator, 400 hours of

simulation can be done in less than six months. The Manual Small Incision Surgery costs just around \$25 and takes 5 minutes. Our goal is to eliminate blindness caused by cataracts, which affects 22 million people worldwide.”

During his early career, Mr. James was the Vice President and a Treasurer of FlightSafety International as well as serving on the board of ORBIS.

Jacob Mohan Thazhathu, President and CEO of HelpMeSee said “Together with expert participants at CCC 2017, HelpMeSee will explore opportunities to scale surgical training in MSICS. Affordable solutions to treat cataract blindness can only be achieved by well-trained MSICS specialists in every community. HelpMeSee is committed to working together with ISMSICS to accomplish this mission.”

Founder and Chairman of ISMSICS Dr. Amulya Sahu, who is a well-known eye surgeon and organizer of this global conference, said “CCC 2017 is a platform for eye surgeons from around the world to share their expertise and learn about innovations in surgical techniques and technology. We are excited that attendees at CCC 2017 will be able to get demonstrations of HelpMeSee’s simulation-based training tools for surgeons to learn MSICS without fear of damaging a patient’s eye. It is a great innovation, which I am sure every training institute will want to have in the future.”

The Eye Surgical Simulator is based on the success of simulation technology in aviation training, uses virtual reality to recreate conditions during surgery and allows for immersive training in life-like situations. Simulation-based training enables trainees to achieve a high level of skill and expertise prior to conducting live surgeries, just as simulator training eliminated risks for training pilots and improved the high safety record of commercial aviation. The company’s comprehensive training program enables a rapid scale-up in training for cataract specialists.

HelpMeSee supports patient centered outreach through various supporting technologies such as android-based “Reach App”, pre-sterilized single-use surgical kit, and surgical quality assurance and patient services.

It follows a social enterprise business model to ensure high quality and most affordable cataract surgical care. Capital and operating funds for HelpMeSee support is provided by the Albert L Ueltschi Foundation, in addition to public and private donations.