



Life Saving, Soul Saving

Andrea Trinidad-Echavez is a USAID (United States Agency for International Development) consultant in the Philippines, and also a Filipino woman with a bleeding disorder. In November 2008, while doing outreach in the city of Cagayan de Oro, Mindanano region, Andrea heard about a child with a suspected bleeding disorder. She stumbled upon him by accident: a hospitalized boy whose foot looked like a grenade had hit it. An untreated ankle bleed had become infected and eaten nine-year-old Kirby's flesh and muscle. Luckily, Andrea knew how to submit a request to Project SHARE for factor to try to save the boy's leg.

Within days, Kirby's physician, Dr. Fedo Go, received our donation. Soon Kirby's condition drastically improved, and the bone infection subsided. His situation seemed ideal: shipping factor to spare a patient from amputation or further deterioration is one of Project SHARE's goals. As our optimism grew, however, so did the bacteria in Kirby's leg.

By May 2009, gangrene forced Kirby's doctors to amputate. Project SHARE again supplied factor. The 70,000 IU shipped to Kirby came from American donors who sent their unwanted factor to Project SHARE instead of throwing it away.

Project SHARE collects unused, unwanted factor from US hemophilia treatment centers (HTCs), specialty pharmacies, and bleeding disorder patients, and redistributes it to underprivileged people with hemophilia and von Willebrand disease. Last year we shipped over 4 million IU to more than 30 countries. Despite these generous donations, our supply is chronically low and sometimes nonexistent.

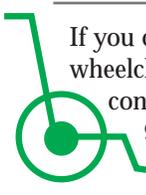
"In a poor country like the Philippines, Project SHARE is truly heaven sent," Andrea attests. "The help it has been providing to patients like Kirby is not just life saving, it is also soul saving, in the sense that it gives renewed hope to people who had already given up on their conditions."

Kirby is one of the lucky ones. Although he lost his leg, Project SHARE was able to save his life. But things remain difficult for his family. To pay for expenses related to his disorder and his surgery, Kirby's parents had to sell their home and move to a more remote area of the Philippines where access to medical care is challenging. Kirby's family is even having trouble getting crutches or a wheelchair for him.

Like Kirby, about 75% of the world's estimated 400,000 people with hemophilia have little or no access to factor. Project SHARE's waiting list contains more than 80 unfulfilled requests for factor from people in 28 countries. We rely on patients, HTCs, and companies to assist us by donating factor and ancillaries.

How can you help? Just let us know when you have unwanted and unused factor. If you work in a pharmacy, check your inventory for product about to expire. When you switch product, send us the product you no longer need.

Or maybe you'll be the one to donate funding for a wheelchair for Kirby, so he can adjust to life with only one leg and enjoy the one thing he cherishes – attending school. With help from you and Project SHARE, we can improve Kirby's quality of life. ☺

 If you can donate funding for a wheelchair for Kirby, please contact Project SHARE at 978-352-7657 or share@kelleycom.com



Andrea H. Trinidad-Echavez