

Millions undergo surgery annually, but the risk of complications, especially due to misplaced breathing tubes during anesthesia, remains a major concern. To address this, two leading health organizations, Smile Train and Lifebox, are joining forces. Their goal? Make a critical piece of equipment standard in operating rooms worldwide: the capnograph.

Smile Train, the world's largest cleft-focused charity, has taken a significant step by donating over \$300,000 worth of capnographs to partner hospitals globally. This adds to their existing investment of over \$600,000, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to safer surgeries for millions.

A capnograph is a device that monitors carbon dioxide levels in a patient's exhaled breath. This simple yet vital tool plays a crucial role in preventing anesthesia-related complications by detecting misplaced breathing tubes. When a breathing tube is misplaced, it can cut off oxygen supply, leading to serious harm or even death. Widespread adoption of capnographs can significantly improve patient safety for millions undergoing surgery each year.

While capnographs have been a staple in high-income countries for decades, they are largely unavailable in low-resource settings. Research shows a staggering 100% gap between the need for capnographs and their availability in low-income countries.

Dr. Elizabeth Igaga, Director of Programs Safety at Smile Train, emphasizes the dangers of working without capnographs: "It's like navigating surgery blindfolded. We know the risks are there, but can't see them until it's too late."

To address this critical gap, Smile Train and Lifebox developed a high-quality, user-friendly, and affordable capnograph specifically designed for low-resource settings. This year, 350 units will be distributed in Benin, Ethiopia, the Philippines, and Uganda.

Lifebox Global CEO Kris Torgeson emphasizes, "Capnography shouldn't be a privilege; it should be standard for surgical safety everywhere." Both organizations advocate for including capnographs in operating room checklists, making them an essential piece of equipment for every patient.

This collaboration between Smile Train and Lifebox marks a pivotal moment in the fight for global surgical safety. By ensuring access to this vital technology, they aim

to leave no patient behind.