



Curitiba Adventist Clinic, 2019.

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## Curitiba Adventist Clinic

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LUVERCY PENEDO FERREIRA, AND RENATO GROSS

Luvercy Penedo Ferreira

Renato Gross

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Curitiba Adventist Clinic (CAC) is a medical health institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church located in the territory of the South Brazil Union (USB). Its headquarters is at Alameda Júlia da Costa, 1447, in the Bigorriho neighborhood, 80730-070, in the city of Curitiba, in the state of Paraná, Brazil.

The clinic has been in operation in Curitiba since 1994, and "is part of the Adventist Hospital Network, a network with more than 500 institutions around the world." Its aim is "to promote the prevention of diseases and

people's health." In addition, "the institution has been expanding its sphere of action beyond consulting rooms, thereby teaching various communities about basic care with physical, mental, and spiritual health. Among the services provided are health fairs, healthy cooking courses, lectures at schools, as well as encouraging the development of programs aimed at regular physical exercise and quality of life."<sup>1</sup>

The institution offers specialties in the following areas: allergology and immunology, clinical analysis, angiology and vascular surgery, cardiology, digestive tract surgery, general surgery, plastic surgery, medical clinic, coloproctology, dermatology, echocardiography, endocrinology and metabolism, pediatric endocrinology, physiotherapy, speech therapy, gastroenterology, geriatrics, gynecology and obstetrics, infectious diseases, mastology, occupational medicine, nephrology, neurology, nutrition, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, orthopedics and traumatology, clinical pathology, pediatrics, pneumology, pediatric pneumology, psychology, psychiatry, rheumatology, ultrasound, and urology.<sup>2</sup>

## Developments Leading to Establishment of the Institution

History shows that, in the 1950s, there were Adventist students in the health area at the Federal University of Paraná, in Curitiba. Eugênio Chagas Lima, Flávio Chagas Lima, Hugo Marquardt, and Ricardo Ostermeyer studied dentistry. The young Ajax da Silveira, Virgílio Martins, and Artur Oberg studied medicine.<sup>3</sup> At the initiative of Doctor Arthur Oberg, a clinic started to operate in the basement of the Central Curitiba Church. At the time, it operated on Ermelino de Leão Street and a sign posted out on the street provided information about the clinic for those walking by.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1973 and 1974, in the church on Alameda Carlos de Carvalho, the clinic "was reopened" under the responsibility of Dr. Arlene Malina Losso and Dr. Miguel Dante Losso. Most of the consultations were made by the medical student from the UFPR, Jônatas Reichert. It was he who was willing to organize a room under the access ramp to the church nave, on the right side, for the clinic to function and managed to recover the furniture of the previous clinic in a warehouse at the headquarters of the Juventude Adventista de Curitiba [Adventist Youth of Curitiba] (JAC).<sup>5</sup>

In early February 1967, the Luzeiro do Sul launch started operating in Paranaguá Bay. In order to operationalize the service to the riverside population and the islands in the bay, the Argentine nurse couple Juan and Etelvina Belvedere who came from Penfigo Hospital, were tireless in their work until 1976. The support base was next to the Health Post in Serra Negra district.<sup>6</sup>

From the late 1960s to the 1990s, the "How to quit smoking in 5 days" course had a wide effect in Curitiba.<sup>7</sup> This initiative demonstrated the Adventist proposal in the area of health, promoted by the SDA Central Curitiba Church. The doctors who taught the course were: Siegfried Hoffmann, Miguel Dante Losso, Fernando Demario, Helnio Nogueira, Jonatas Reichert, Maria Madalena Moreira Rebesco, Margaret Solá, Gunter Hans Filho, Arlene Malina Losso, and Jonatan Loschner. In addition to the doctors, dentists Reinaldo Reichembach and Gersom

Bondarczuk also participated. Pastors Davi Marski, José Irajá da Costa e Silva, Cláudio Belz, and Paulo Ieske also collaborated, along with many others.<sup>8</sup>

This movement in the health field demonstrated the involvement of Adventist professionals in medical missionary work in the region, which consolidated the community's awareness that something further needed to be done.<sup>9</sup>

## The Institution's Foundation

In 1993, a property located at Alameda Júlia da Costa, 1447, in the Bigorriho neighborhood, was purchased by South Paraná Conference to house the Curitiba Medical Clinic. In the same year, the building had to undergo renovation, funded by the joint efforts of the South Brazil Union (USB), the South Paraná Conference, and Penfigo Hospital. The opening of the clinic had the initiative and support of these three institutions through their respective administrators: Rodolpho Gorski (president), Ivanaudo Barbosa (secretary), and Marino de Oliveira (treasurer), representatives of the South Brazil Union; Samuel Zukowski (president), Otávio Fonseca (secretary) and Ivalter Souza (treasurer), from South Paraná Conference (ASP); and Helnio Judson Nogueira (medical director) and Ivan Souza (financial director) of Penfigo Hospital.<sup>10</sup>

The clinic was inaugurated on August 16, 1994, with four consulting offices, a procedure room, administration, and an auditorium with 42 seats. That month, 59 patients visited the clinic. The person appointed to manage the clinic in its early years was Dr. Daniel Faria. His team consisted of the following doctors: Ademir Marques Rocco, Fernando Demário, Jonatan Reichert, Luis Alberto Ferreira, Maria Madalena Rebesco, and Washington Luiz Bittencourt.<sup>11</sup> Later, the facilities were expanded to seven consulting offices, which served 12 medical specialties, an outpost for outpatient collections, a physiotherapy clinic, and other procedures.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, the dream of having an Adventist clinic that served the population of Curitiba was realized. From that moment on, the city and region could count on an institution that declared the following values: "Love for God and neighbor, with the patient as the focus, respect for Bible principles, and professional ethics in all areas, and quality services."<sup>13</sup>

## History of the Institution

Given its objective to be a medical missionary work, its mission from the onset was to "promote physical, mental, and spiritual health, following the example of the Lord Jesus, the Physician of physicians," focused especially on patients and employees. The results of this mission were soon to be seen.<sup>14</sup>

In 1996, the physiotherapist Liliane Aparecida Domeda was baptized after receiving guidance on health reform and Bible studies from Pastor Marcos Saraiva and Antônio Anhaia. On the day of her baptism, she declared: "I am happy with the decision I made and I am thankful to the clinic for showing me the way of Christ."<sup>15</sup> This was

an example of the missionary nature of that institution, which has been constantly renewed in its work with the passing of time.

In the 2000s there was an increase in the number of Latin American Adventists who were willing to go to other countries to serve as missionaries. In 2014, the clinic was involved in this project and sent one of its doctors to contribute to overseas missionary service. As part of a team of North American professionals, Dr. Carlos Michiles Frank, from the field of occupational medicine, donated nine days of “voluntary service to the Pagudpud community in the Philippines.”<sup>6</sup>

At that time, the Filipino population suffered from some catastrophes that caused the proliferation of certain diseases. In addition to these problems, they faced other challenges. When speaking, for example, of the Filipino food culture, Dr. Carlos reported that “with [a] diet based on white rice and many spices, it is common to find diabetic and hypertensive patients. Gastritis is also very recurrent.” In this context, having 75 medical appointments in one day was a reason to celebrate.<sup>17</sup> Faced with a reality like this, the Adventist Church allocated resources for the construction of a clinic in that country. To maintain this and other projects in the Philippines, Curitiba Adventist Clinic provided active support with resources and subsidies for medical treatments and medicines.<sup>18</sup>

From that small start in August 1994 to the year 2012, there was a significant increase in the number of clinic visits, from 59 in its first month of operation, to 50,000 in the twelve months of 2012. The number of health professionals increased from 9 to 50. In 2012, 6,000 new patients benefited from the 32 health programs at the clinic, and 33 medical specialties were available.<sup>19</sup> Due to the evolution of medical missionary work in this region, a new unit was planned.

In 2014, CAC and CAPA - Porto Alegre Adventist Clinic - went through an important change in their organizational structure. As they are in the missionary territory of the South Brazil Union, the two clinics now have a unified administration.<sup>20</sup> With rapid growth, in early May 2015, CAC inaugurated a new unit, expanding the administrative area and support areas and creating services aimed at preventive medicine. With this new unit, the service capacity has doubled, from 50,000 to 100,000 per year. This new unit was established at Alferes Ângelo Sampaio, 2585, in the Bigorriho neighborhood (also known as Champagnat).<sup>21</sup>

Also in 2015, an area of 3,440 m<sup>2</sup> was acquired, for the construction and reinstallation of the two CAC units, in the central region of Curitiba, at Avenida Vicente Machado, 2500. The intention was for the two existing units in the city to function in the new installations.<sup>22</sup> In addition to this expansion project, the Adventist Church in southern Brazil initiated, in 2013, technical and financial feasibility studies for the construction of a new health institution in the capital of Paraná.

The cornerstone for the clinic took place on August 12, 2016, with the presence of the leaders of the South American Division, Pastors Erton Kohler, Edward Heindiger Zevallos, Marlon de Souza Lopes, and Sérgio Fernandes dos Reis; the leaders of the South Brazil Union, Pastors Marlinton Souza Lopes, Charles Edson

Rampanelli, and Edson Erthal de Medeiros; and the administrators of the clinic: Altiery Kumpel and Dr. Helnio Judson Nogueira.<sup>23</sup>

In 2016, the two clinics, CAC and CAPA, were still under the joint management of the South Brazil Union. Altogether, 120 specialist doctors and 175 professionals worked in the two health units.<sup>24</sup> The total number of CAC servers was 85 people, with 53 non-worker doctors providing services and nine therapists in the same category. Other professionals worked in other areas.<sup>25</sup>

Since then, the team at Curitiba Adventist Clinic has been assisting people from different places, from residents in the city and metropolitan regions, to those from the interior of the state of Paraná (approximately 100 municipalities), or even from other states. In order to provide quality service, the clinic currently has rooms for procedures, administration, reception, "26 consulting offices, 45 employees, 57 doctors, and 6 therapists."<sup>26</sup>

In addition, the clinic offers medical consultations, therapies, diagnostic tests, and medical procedures (started in 1994), management of occupational medicine, occupational safety (started in 2001), and *Medical check-ups* (started from 2015).<sup>27</sup> Currently, 40 specialties are offered with an average of 57,000 visits per year.<sup>28</sup>

## Historical Role of the Institution

Promoting holistic health and well-being through diagnosis, treatment, and excellent medicine are objectives pursued by CAC. Throughout its 25 years of history, the clinic has prioritized quality in providing services and patient care, based on love for God and neighbor, respect for Bible principles and professional ethics.

The clinic has acted in companies, schools, churches, and community centers, through lectures, training, "How to Stop Smoking" courses, healthy cooking,<sup>29</sup> and health fairs,<sup>30</sup> among other actions. The purpose "is to be relevant not only in the care unit, but also outside of it," with the aim of "meeting the health needs of the community, sharing Adventist health and healthy lifestyle principles, and offering free medical care."<sup>31</sup>

These programs and courses have impacted participants and have transformed lives in many ways. The results will also be seen in eternity.

## Outlook

The institution is located in a strategic point in the city of Curitiba, close to institutions such as Parana South and Central Conferences, the South Brazil Union, and Curitiba Central Adventist Church, which has made easy access to the clinic service available to the staff in the SDA administrative headquarters. In addition, there is service to Adventist educational institutions, such as: Curitiba Adventist Academy Bom Retiro (first Adventist college in Brazil), Centenario Adventist Academy, Alto Boqueirao Adventist Academy, Portao Adventist Academy, Boa Vista Adventist Academy, and Boqueirao Adventist Academy.

The clinic's plan is to remain a support for the Church, actively working in preaching the gospel through medical missionary work. To fulfill this mission, in addition to using the eight natural remedies and mobilizing the infrastructure already offered, the new clinic - when inaugurated - will provide its patients with a sophisticated range of new options: specialty clinics, diagnostic center by image, preventive medicine center, surgical center, short hospital stay, elderly care center, healthy restaurant, auditorium, administrative areas, and technical and support areas.

## List of Administrative Directors

Daniel de Faria (1994-1997); Otoniel Fonseca (1997-2000); Pedro Mendes de Carvalho (2000-2003); Helder Roberto Arco (2003-2004); Luiz Alberto Ferreira (2004-2006); Everson Teixeira Braga (2007-2010); Altiery Kämpel (2011-present).<sup>3233</sup>

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## NOTES

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2. *Curitiba Adventist Clinic*, "Especialidades" [Specialties], accessed on December 11, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PHhz86>.
3. Renato Gross, *Parana Adventist Academy (Brazil): a history in three times - 1939-2009* (Ivatuba, PR: Parana Adventist Academy, 2009), 54, 55.
4. Jônatas Reichert, e-mail message to the author, November 6, 2016.
5. Ibid.
6. Jônatas Reichert, e-mail message to the author, November 7, 2016.
7. The How to Quit Smoking course "is an initiative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which promotes the courses and provides space in the church's own rooms, with the sole interest of helping those who are trying to quit smoking. The course is completely free." Accessed on December 12, 2019, <https://bit.ly/35jysMo>.
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9. *Encyclopedia of Adventist Memory in Brazil*, "Galdino Nunes Vieira," accessed on November 15, 2016, <https://bit.ly/2lh1GRV>.
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13. *Curitiba Adventist Clinic*, "Sobre nós" [About us], accessed on May 30, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LJenHR>.
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17. Ibid., 29.

18. Ibid.
19. Curitiba Adventist Clinic, Facebook post, August 16, 2012 (9:15 am), accessed on December 12, 2019, <https://bit.ly/38CDdTF>.
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23. Ibid.
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25. Talita Farinon, e-mail message to the author, December 13, 2016.
26. Jéssica Guidolin, "Clínica Adventista de Curitiba completa 25 anos de existência" [Curitiba Adventist Clinic completes 25 years of existence], Curitiba Adventist Clinic, August 16, 2019, accessed on December 16, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PQTmMt>.
27. Talita Farinon, e-mail message to the author, December 13, 2016.
28. Ibid.
29. The Healthy Cooking course aims to "promote a healthy lifestyle for the family, without sacrificing taste. [...] A mobile kitchen is assembled and the student learns, in practice and through printed materials, how to prepare natural recipes in a creative way that are attractive to the taste." Accessed on December 12, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2EnEq3j>.
30. "Based on the classic 'The Science of Good Living' and the latest findings from science, Adventists believe that eight of these habits are critical to maintaining health and recovering it in most cases. It is to promote the practical teaching of these eight habits that the Health Fair exists - an official program of the Ministry of Health of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is non-profitable and is carried out by volunteers." Accessed on December 5, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PwE5hR>.
31. Jéssica Guidolin, "Clínica Adventista de Curitiba completa 25 anos de existência" [Curitiba Adventist Clinic completes 25 years of existence], Curitiba Adventist Clinic, August 16, 2019, accessed on December 16, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PQTmMt>.
32. Ibid.
33. More information about Curitiba Adventist Clinic can be found at: <http://curitiba.clinicaadventista.org.br/>; on Facebook @ *clinica.curitiba*, and on Twitter @*ClinicaCuritiba*.



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