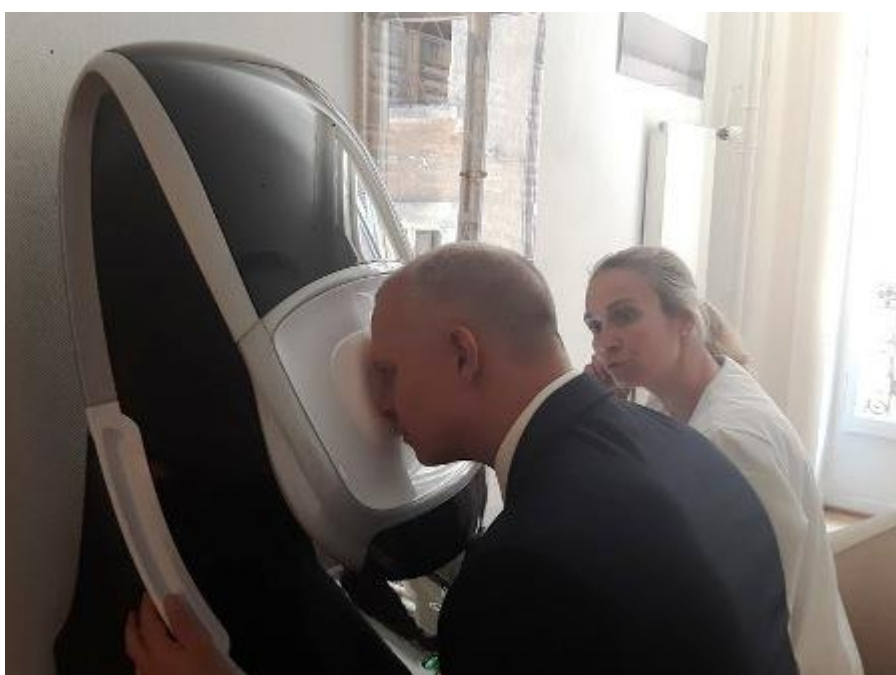


Health minister visits collaborating eye centre in Switzerland | 29 May 2017



A national screening programme to detect Seychellois patients with complications of diabetes in the eyes (or diabetic retinopathy) will start in January 2018 under the guidance of renown Swiss eye specialist (ophthalmologist), Dr Cyrus Tabatabay.



The Seychelles delegation to the World Health Assembly led by Minister Jean-Paul Adam visited the eye clinic of Professor Tabatabay in Geneva, Switzerland, last Friday to see first hand how the screening programme will be run in Seychelles.

Prof. Tabatabay is collaborating with the Ministry of Health, through the Teaching Eye Surgery Foundation, to run the screening.

"You need to have a first hand experience of how the test is done and what it can show, for you to really appreciate its benefits," said Prof. Tabatabay in the presence of his associates.

Minister Adam, health principal secretary Bernard Valentin and senior nursing officer Doloresse Pool, all underwent the same screening tests that will be conducted in Seychelles as from next year.

At a first stage all adults aged between 35 and 45 years (roughly 15,000 people) will be invited to undertake "laser scanning" of the back of their eyes (retina) to see if they have early or late complications of diabetes. Depending on results, they will either be given advice or treated. Repeat examinations will take place at regular intervals.

"It is a revolutionary screening test," Prof. Tabatabay told the delegation.

"In less than five minutes, the retinal laser scanner is able to clearly show whether the patient is normal or has small or large bleeding, swelling or detachment of the retina that are usually associated with hypertension or diabetes type 2."

Minister Adam said he was impressed by what he saw.

"That screening programme is very feasible in Seychelles and it is a great and important addition to what we are doing to more efficiently address our challenge of diabetes," he said.