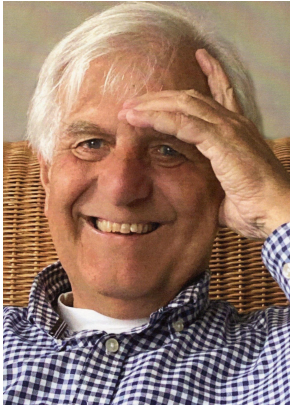




Product Bulletin

September 2026



Auke Wiersma †

Sadly, we have to begin this bulletin with the sorrowful news that our project leader Auke Wiersma—a man known to many of you—passed away on August 26th.

Auke was a retired general practitioner and had been a volunteer with Medic since August 25, 2010. Over the past 16 years, he successfully oversaw numerous projects. For instance, he was the driving force behind the external fixator workshops and the ultrasound course, which he organized in collaboration with the Royal Tropical Institute's training program for tropical medicine physicians. Auke was deeply committed, the embodiment of kindness, and never angry or irritable. We miss him.

It is difficult to return to the present reality after such sad news. I am certain Auke would fully understand; the matter at hand concerns a product in which he was also deeply involved.

Blount staples: a simple solution for conditions such as bowlegs and knock-knees

Children who are still growing can sometimes develop severe bowlegs or knock-knees. An orthopedic surgeon can harness the growth process to gradually correct the alignment of the legs. A small metal staple—known as a Blount staple—can be used for this purpose.



One technique involves the Blount staple: a small metal staple placed on one side of the growth plate. This temporarily slows growth on that side, while the other side of the bone continues to grow. As a result, the alignment of the leg can gradually improve during the growth process.

This technique has been in use since 1949. While modern systems featuring a small plate and screws are frequently used today, the Blount staple offers a significant advantage: the simplicity of the implant.

Photo: titanium staples (€1.75 each) in various designs; a drill guide (€10) and a staple holder (€15), both made of stainless steel.

The strength of the Blount staple lies precisely in its simplicity. The implant is relatively easy to insert and requires no special plates or multiple screws. This makes the technique potentially attractive for hospitals in rural areas and humanitarian settings, where resources are sometimes limited. Although it is unusual to do so, I am mentioning prices here to demonstrate that children in difficult situations can be helped for a very small sum.

The staples offered by Stichting Medic are a prime example of a relatively simple and highly cost-effective solution that aligns with the practical realities of healthcare. The most advanced solution is not always the most appropriate one; a simple, reliable implant can be invaluable precisely where options are limited.