



Overseas Specialist Surgical Association of Australia

Newsletter – August 2006 - Issue no. 8

Welcome to another edition of our newsletter. So much has happened since the last issue, a medical sub-committee has been formed and have had their first meeting, the committee has been busy organising and implementing fundraising events, surgical teams continue to undertake visits, the number of surgical visits to increase with AusAID funding under the ANTARA project where RACS and OSSAA have joint management of the surgical teams, and so the list of activities go. More excitedly, 2 patients from Flores are due to come to Australia for surgery early August. The implementation of this project has been made possible by the assistance of the Lions Clubs of Edwardstown and Brighton. A very big thank you to these Clubs and to those who have been involved in the whole event. ROMAC has also commenced the process of bringing another patient for surgery in Adelaide before the end of this year. We hope that there will be others who will be able to assist those patients whose surgical treatment cannot be done at the local hospitals.

Message from the President – Mr. Bob Laws

AusAID has provided a major boost by providing funds for surgical team visits to the Indonesian province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), which includes West Timor and Flores. As part of the broad-based ANTARA project \$500,000 has been allocated via the Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS) to fund twelve surgical team trips between August 2006 and early 2007. The approach is based on the model pioneered by OSSAA's medical teams and will cover a broad range of specialities (general, orthopaedic, paediatric, plastic and ENT surgery as well as optometry and ophthalmology) and includes training programs.

The confidence and networks built up by OSSAA teams in NTT over the years have greatly assisted RACS in planning the ANTARA Project, which will be initiated by a general surgical team trip to Atambua in August.

After another successful fundraising year, thanks to our growing membership base and our generous sponsors, OSSAA is also considering expanding our services to other locations in NTT while continuing to fund at least two surgical team trips per year to Kefamenanu and Cancar. More on this in the next Newsletter!

SURGICAL TEAM NEWS

So far five surgical visits have been undertaken this year. 2 visits to Kefamenanu, (Timor), 2 visits to Cancar (Flores) and one to Timor Leste. Teams on these visits include Plastic/Reconstructive surgeons, General surgeons and an Orthopaedic surgeon. The visits to Timor Leste and Cancar saw a total of 361 patients with 188 patients receiving surgical treatment. Patient details from Kefamenanu (Timor) on the most recent visit have yet to be provided.

The Indonesian Doctors Association (KKI) have recently introduced a system where foreign doctors need registration with the Indonesian Association to 'practice' in Indonesia. Doctors of OSSAA surgical teams have been complying with this requirement with the help and support of Professor Ahmad Djojogugito from the National University Sebelas Maret in Yogyakarta.

WEST TIMOR (TIMOR)

The team visits to West Timor since 2003, have been concentrating on Kefamenanu Hospital only. Kefa has had 2 visits funded by OSSAA this year. The teams included general surgeons, a physiotherapist, a dermatologist plus operating theatre nurses and interpreters.

Cases presented at these visits range through general surgical, orthopaedic, gynaecology and plastic surgery.

Summary of clinical activities for Timor (1 visit):

Total patient consultation: 273

Total surgical procedures: 93

At the June/July visit, Dr. Brian Miller initiated a new project of drug treatment for a special group of goitre patients. Included in the patients seen in the project was (a) a patient with cancer who came for an operation during the visit (histology pending), (b) one clinically hyperthyroid patient who was treated medically, (c) a patient with goitre which was not large enough to warrant inclusion in the study. If the treatment is successful, patients with goitre will not necessarily require surgical treatment which should, therefore reduce the need for surgery in these cases.

The AusAID project in Nusa Tenggara Timur (Timor), under the Australia-Nusa Tenggara Assistance for Regional Autonomy (ANTARA) is finally coming about with the first surgical visit under the project to be undertaken early in August, 2006 to Atambua. The surgical division of the project, managed by the Australasian College of Surgeons utilises the expertise of OSSAA personnel in the organisation of surgical visits. The team going to Atambua includes a general surgeon, an anaesthetist, two operating theatre nurses and our committee member, Dr. Dion Suyapto, as interpreter. Dr. Suyapto has been to Atambua and is familiar with the health authorities of the Atambua Hospital and is expected to be instrumental in the success of the visit. Other visits under the ANTARA project are scheduled for later in the year. The OSSAA surgical visits will continue as normal.

First surgical team under the AusAID funded ANTARA Project at Darwin airport with Ruth Boveington.



Dr. Rob Ray, Mr. Neil Mills, Dr. David Deutscher, Ms. Helen Postma, Ms. Daliah Moss, Ruth Boveington and Dr. Dion Suyapto

CANCAR, FLORES, NTT



Team with local counterparts after patient consultation

2 surgical teams have been undertaken to visit Cancar earlier this year. The teams included one Plastic/Reconstructive surgeon with a General surgeon and one Orthopaedic surgical team. The Plastic/Reconstructive / General surgical team, included counterpart surgical trainees from Indonesia. The Indonesian plastic surgeon came from the Rumah Sakit Kanker Dharmais (Cancer Hospital) Jakarta, the general surgeon was a senior registrar from Rumah Sakit Dr. Moewardi (Dr. Moewardi Hospital) in Solo (Jogyakarta). Both Indonesian counterparts including the counterpart plastic surgeon from the previous visit have expressed interest in participating with our teams in future visits, following an excellent teaching experience they had.

A young burns patient who will require ongoing surgery at team visits. He has had initial surgery to release his contracted left hand



Another young burns patient whose chronic wound would not heal for months.



Unhealed chronic wound

After split skin grafting



Dr. Mark Moore and Dr. Bob Linacre with counterpart Surgeons, Dr. Harianto, Dr. Irena and Dr. Sujoko, anaesthetists Dr. Brian Spain and Dr. Steve Kinnear and Recovery nurse, Mr. Aaron Leinonen – Cancar May 2006

Surgeons in operating theatres



Dr. Moore with Dr. Irena (Plastic surgeons)

Dr. Sujoko and Dr. Linacre (General surgeons)

The Orthopaedic surgical team led by Dr. John Kagi visited Cancar a week after the Plastic/General surgical teams. They saw more than seventy patients and operated on 26 patients, mainly children with club feet, fractures and corrective procedures.

With changes to the health system in the government, more patients from remote and poor areas have turned up for clinical assessment. Patients from as far away as Maumere (12 hours bus ride) make the effort to turn up at Cancar to be seen by our team. Although nearly all these patients had to return without surgical treatment, they were happy enough that their names have been placed on our waiting list. It is hoped that the commencement of the ANTARA project may include visits to these areas where the service is just as desperately needed.



Mothers with cleft patients referred from Kupang



Abdominal tumour
Before surgery



At removal of tumour



Wound closure with rotation flap



At ICU a few hours after
surgery

The cost for treatment of poor patients from remote villages has now been subsidised by the Regional government. Patients who arrive with notes to state their circumstances are hospitalised in the hospital (St. Rafael) paid for by the regional government. Those who don't have notes but are still unable to pay for treatment are accommodated at Rumah John, a ward at the Rehabilitation wing, St Damian.

Summary of clinical activities for Cancar, 2006 (2 visits)

Total Consultation:	239
Total Operations	131
Cleft lip/palate	23
Burns	10
General surgical	72
(incl. thyroid/hernia/cancers/L/A cases)	
Orthopaedic	26

The next proposed visit will be undertaken in October, the visit will be another combine visit by the Plastic/Reconstructive and Orthopaedic teams.

The difficulty of the visits to Cancar remains with the flights between Denpasar and Labuan Bajo. Merpati only flies 2 days between the two centres. GT Air, so far has a more reliable schedule but is at this stage, nothing is certain. In previous visits, team members have had luggage left at Bali for up to 3 days and have had to improvise with clothing, personal effects etc.



Surgeons improvising with clothing due to non arrival of personal effects.



Team with local staff and counterparts – Cancar, May 2006

EAST TIMOR (TIMOR LESTE)

One surgical visit has been undertaken to East Timor this year. The visit included an additional plastic surgeon Dr. Michael Klaassen, for the first time. On arrival at the airport in Dili, the team was alerted to the possibility of disruptions during the week due to 'planned peaceful demonstrations'. The demonstrations escalated to the violence which disrupted the country for a number of weeks.

The turnout of patients in Dili was adequate, clinical referrals remain high. The week started off inefficiently due to a bus accident where 36 nuns were hurt. Our patients were refused admission for surgery on the following day. At the intervention of our long term counterpart, Maria Dias, an old building used to store gas cylinders was cleaned up and used as a 'ward' for our patients.



Emergency ward allocated for our patients – Dili Hospital



Plastic surgeons, Mark Moore and Mike Klaassen with Sr. Penny Craig and local nurses at ward round

A negative factor of the Dili hospital remains the uncooperative attitude of the operating theatre nurses. None of the operating theatre nurses were prepared to utilise the presence of our team to learn new techniques or provide any assistance. Only 2 scrub nurses assisted the team throughout the week. The lack of assistance from the operating theatre staff restricted the number

of patients who could have had surgery during the week. On the first day of surgery, we were informed by the local theatre staff that they had been informed by their superiors (Cuban doctors), that they (local nurses) did not have to assist our team as we arrive with a complete team. Although the local staff knew that we had always arrived with a complete team, they have always been aware that our team members provide them with training, guidance and assistance.

However, a small team of enthusiastic anaesthetic trainees, including Dr. Flavio, worked with our team throughout the week, to further their experience and learn from our anaesthetist, Dr. David McLeod.



Dr. David McLeod with anaesthetic trainees – Dili Hospital

At this visit, the surgeons had exchanged hospitals, Dr. Tony Fernandes who would normally operate at the Dili Hospital went to Baucau whilst Dr. Mark Moore remained at Dili.

Burns patients



Burn contracture – left elbow



Contracture release with Z-plasties

Neck burn contracture



Before surgery



Contracture release, split skin grafted and stapled

The visit ended with the theft of our team leader's mobile phone in the operating theatre of Dili Hospital, followed by the team's surgical list being reduced on the last day in order to assist the resident RACS surgeon in the management of the victims of the violence.

Summary of clinical activities for Timor Leste (1 visit)

Total numbers of patients consulted:	122
Total number of patients surgically treated:	57
Cleft lip/palate	38
Burns	6
Others	13

In Baucau, Dr. Philip, again provided excellent support. The small team of operating theatre staff was always available to support the team. Mary Lou Bishop (Linvatec) donated a Diathermy machine which was presented to the Baucau hospital. The diathermy machine at Baucau had not worked for months so the replacement was mostly appreciated.

At the end of the visit, the Australian Ambassador in Dili invited the team to a party to farewell a staff member of the embassy and also to thank our surgical team for the long term involvement in helping the Timor Leste community.



Dr. Moore and the theatre nurses who assisted throughout the week

Following the most recent problems in Timor Leste, Dr. Rui Araujo, who has been considered a long term counterpart (as a young Registrar in 1996), more recently as Health Minister is now Deputy Prime Minister in the new government.

Cleft lip and palate patients remain dominant in the composition of patients presenting at our visits. The number of cases in adults and young adults turning up appears to have lightly increased, although the number of new cases of young patients remains high.

A bilateral cleft lip and palate patient whose cleft lip has previously been repaired. He is currently waiting for a complete cleft lip revision and palate repair



Young teenage patient with unilateral cleft lip



Before surgery



After surgery

A mother of six with left unilateral cleft lip



Before surgery



After surgery

The proposed next visit to Timor Leste will be in November, subject to clearance of security in the region.

OTHER NEWS

Medical Sub -Committee

The medical subcommittee had their first meeting on May 23rd, 2006. Included in the medical sub-committee are the current 2 surgical team leaders and members of surgical teams. Sr. Margaret Maloney was nominated as Chairperson. The sub-committee had a successful first meeting, it is anticipated that many points for discussion at the committee of management meetings, concerning medical and clinical matters will be taken on by the sub-committee for speedy resolution.

Special Project.

Following the most recent visit to Flores, the Committee was, again advised about patients whose surgical treatment cannot be performed in Cancar. Two of our corporate members, the Lions Club of Edwardstown and the Lions Club of Brighton were approached to see if they would be interested in the project. Both Clubs agreed to sponsor one of the patients, at a cost estimated at between \$7500.00 and \$8000.00 each. We are delighted that these two Clubs have accepted our invitation to be involved. Two patients with facial tumours have been selected for the project.



ROMAC has initiated the paperwork to get this child to Adelaide for surgical treatment before the end of the year.

ROMAC has awarded Dr. Mark Moore a plaque for distinguished services with ROMAC, in identifying Bertha da Costa's deformity and surgically treating her in Adelaide 2 years ago. Mrs Lea Frick was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for caring for Bertha whilst receiving surgical treatment in Adelaide.

Fundraising

A number fundraising activities have been carried out since the beginning of this year. From the Unley Art Exhibition, \$3155 was presented to OSSAA by the Hyde Park Rotary Club.

Film night

The Da Vinci Code movie was a sell out, the response and support was overwhelming. Nearly \$5,000 was raised as profit from the event. Thank you to all who participated.

Dinner Dance

On the 3rd of June OSSAA held its first Dinner Dance at the John DiFede Reception Centre with 425 guests attending. The theme of the night was 'Latino'. The state champion Latin dancing team performed on the evening, entertaining and setting the mood. The Latino band got everyone off their chairs and onto the dance floor

Dr Moore addressed the guests with an informative presentation about OSSAA. This allowed many new people to understand what this Association is all about and its purpose and commitment to helping underprivileged people.

The auction and raffle commenced and with lots of generous bidders and prize winners. Guests bid for many exclusive items such as a soccer table, purchased for \$2000.00. Signed Adelaide Crows Guernsey, purchased for \$1000.00. Overall it was a very successful evening raising almost \$21,000.00.

Many thanks to all the people who donated generously and for making the evening a fun and successful event. We look forward to OSSAA's next dinner dance.

Midyear Sunday Lunch

A very successful Lunch was held on Sunday, June 25th at the Glenelg Golf Club with 110 members and Guests attending. The Guest Speaker, Sir Eric Neal AC CVO, spoke of the Role of the Governor of South Australia. His address was both informative and entertaining. Sir Eric took us back to the first Governor of South Australia and told us of the various changes in the Role of Governor since that time. The afternoon was very enjoyable and an amount of \$1074.00 was raised.

Book Launch

The book, 'Healing Timor Leste: a consultation of specialists' has been launched at the Royal South Australian Society for the Arts on Sunday July 09, 2006 by Commander H. Douglas

Symons OAM, JP, GSCJ, CMSJ. Approximately 110 invited guests attended and listened to Dr. Mark Moore and Dr. Margaret King-Boyes outline the origins of the book, followed by the formal launch conducted by Commander Symons. It is hoped that the book will be formally launched in other states. All members are encouraged to purchase a book, all profits from the book will be used to advance the work of OSSAA. The book costs \$40.00 plus \$3.00 for handling and postage.

Computers for Medical Teams.

The Lions Club of Richmond, a corporate member of OSSAA, was informed that two laptop computers were urgently required to be used by the surgical teams in Eastern & Western Indonesia and Flores. The Board of the Club held a special meeting and agreed to provide both computers at a cost of \$2321.00.



Mr. Bill Fisher, President of Lions Club of Richmond presenting one of the computers to Dr Mark Moore.

The following events are proposed for upcoming fundraising in 2006/2007:

- Film Night
- Dinner Dance
- Melbourne Cup Luncheon – Italian community
- Art Exhibition – Unley Park Rotary
- Bush Dance
- Fashion Parade

A very big thank you to Mr. Doug Omond and Mrs. Connie Granozio and the Unley Rotary Club for organising and accomplishing great outcomes from the fundraising activities.

Membership.

Membership at the end of June comprised 18 Lions Clubs in South Australia and the Northern Territory and 4 Rotary Clubs in South Australia. Many of these Clubs have been very generous towards the funding necessary to send our teams to Timor Leste, Timor and Flores.

Two Clubs have provided surgical instruments, two have sponsored patients to Australia for surgery and many others have provided very generous donations. One Lions Club in lieu of making a donation sponsored all of the members as members of OSSAA.

To date we have 52 corporate and 211 ordinary members.

Memberships remain \$25 per year for ordinary membership and \$100 for corporate membership. Remember, the organisation is dependent on your support to improve the lives of those who are much more disadvantaged.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organisation is most grateful to the Department of Health and offices of the Bupati, throughout NTT, the various Catholic orders, SSsP, PRR, ALMA Sisters throughout NTT and Flores for their ongoing assistance and bilateral support. The dedication and commitment of the nuns in caring for patients after the teams leave is a major responsibility.

Special mention goes to the Consulate of the Republic of Indonesia in Darwin for their ongoing support with visas and supporting documentation.

The following organisations and individuals are acknowledged for their ongoing support:

- Adelaide Pathology Partners
- Calvary Hospital
- David Carney – Ehicon for supplies of sutures
- Indonesian Christian Community - Darwin
- Indonesian Consulate and staff - Darwin
- Lions Club of Edwardstown Inc.
- Mary-Lou Bishop – Linvatec
- O.P.A.L.
- Royal Adelaide Hospital
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)
- Rotary Club of Campbelltown
- Rotary Club of Unley
- Thrifty Car Rental, (Mr. Brian Measey) NT / East Timor
- Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide
- Grant Brett, GARUDA INDONESIA for allowing us to take our luggage on board despite the excess weight.
- JOAN WEBB and all who knitted soft toys and beanies for young patients each visit.
- Alison Kely, XANADU for all the bracelets for young patients
- Vikki from ANAEQUIP for the loan of pulse Oximeter
- Marilyn Parkes, ORION for the paraffin
- Jim Kiley, ATLAS HEALTHCARE, syringes and needles.
- Greg Smith, HELICON TECHNOLOGY
- Paul Neary, JOHNSON & JOHNSON, Box of sterile marking pens
- Neil Talbot of Zimmer (Adelaide) who secured for us a second hand Zimmer inflatable haemostatic cuff machine from Darwin Hospital.
- Sr Gwenyth Fitzgerald of Princess Margaret Hospital for a set of childrens cuffs
- Kevin Staaf, Orthopaedic Theatre Technician Royal Perth Hospital, for a complete set of adult cuffs
- Brigitte Cronan of Johnson & Johnson for all the Ethicon sutures
- Matt Austin of Stryker Perth for 300 Mabig loose leaf files for medical record keeping in Cancar.

The Committee of Management would like to thank all members for your help and support. We trust that you will continue to support us in helping those who do not have the chance to help themselves.

Further information can be obtained by writing to us at : PO Box 138, UNLEY, SA 5061 or to: Ruth Boveington, PO Box 795, Darwin, NT 0801 or, visit our website at: www.ossaainc.org.au