

## A word from the President

Hello all! Covid 19 has changed our worlds in so many ways. The four 2020 surgical team visits planned for Timor Leste and Indonesia have been put on hold. We will resume when it is safe to do so.....hopefully not too far into 2021. Our last team trip was led by Mark Moore to Dili in November 2019....see report across.

Staying in touch is important. From Halilulik NTT we have received vision of the Marianum hospital's nuns and nurses making and distributing face masks to townspeople. In Timor Leste preparations are well advanced (despite a shortage of personal protective equipment) to prevent a widespread Covid 19 outbreak.....fingers crossed.

In February 2020 a report entitled *The economic value of primary cleft surgery in Timor Leste 2000-2017* was published in the World Journal of Surgery. Our 44 team visits, delivering cleft and palate repair and continuous training, were estimated to have benefitted the local economy by US \$2m+.....this study did not attempt to measure the other wide-ranging humanitarian benefits.

The photo below from Mark is of a girl at school graduation in Cancar brought to Adelaide 14 years ago for tissue removal and again recently for further surgery. The changes speak for themselves!



We were looking forward to having another celebratory fundraiser with the annual mid-year luncheon at the Glenelg Golf Club but that has been postponed until next year. James Bond, or at least viewing of the film *No Time To Die*, has been rescheduled for Sunday November 15. A brilliant donation of \$15,000 was received from the estate of Annie Roman, at the request of her executors.

To all our members and generous donors. May we stay the course and continue to support the marvellous efforts of our teams.

**Patrick Markwick-Smith**

## Dili, Timor Leste

From 23 – 30 November Dr Mark Moore led a plastic and reconstructive team, comprising anaesthetists Drs David McLeod and Brigid Brown, and nursing sisters Liz Mazzei and Jacqueline Price to the national hospital. Dr Joao Ximenes was again invaluable. This trip was originally scheduled for Baucau but there were more patients awaiting attention in Dili...and the roads are better. During the week there were 52 consultations and 32 operations comprising 26 clefts/palates, 2 bone grafts and 4 others. Below we have a 1 year old female patient with bilateral cleft lip and the team. To date 1082 clefts have received surgery in Timor Leste in 48 visits.



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