

Interplast inroads into surgical care

Interplast has made incredible achievements that make a real difference, both now and for the future

Interplast Australia & New Zealand

At this time it is opportune to reflect on the successes and inroads Interplast volunteers have made to improving lives by increasing access to surgery in the Asia Pacific Region. In total 31 service and training activities and supporting resources were undertaken in 15 countries during the last financial year.

In October 2009 Interplast sponsored nine surgeons from five countries, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Burma, Nepal and Papua New Guinea to attend the inaugural Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons Congress. Interplast has been working with these international delegates for several years and watched each of them develop to now become trainers in their own country. The Interplast sponsored surgeons had the opportunity to present a paper at the Congress, and mix with their peers from Australia and across the world.

Interplast continued its training and development work in Laos by sponsoring two Laotian anaesthetists to attend three months training at the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children in Perth.

To further the development work of Occupational Therapy (OT) in Bangladesh, two Bangladeshi OTs were sponsored to attend the Hand Therapy Conference in Melbourne and spent some time in Victorian hospitals before returning home to pass on their new found knowledge and experience.

Early Management of Severe Burns (EMSB) training courses continued in Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh and commenced in Fiji for the Pacific based health care professionals.



Interplast volunteer, Sydney nurse Michelle Skrivanic teaching in the Philippines Baguio City Nov 2008

These programs are conducted in cooperation with the Australian & New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA) and draw together health professionals from local and surrounding areas. Following each training program a number of delegates are also selected to participate in an Instructors Course to build the Faculty of EMSB trainers in that country with the view to self sufficiency. The enthusiasm for these courses and thirst for knowledge continue to excite the Interplast medical volunteers who are involved. Many courses have also had the favorable affect of building camaraderie of the medical fraternity in that country.

Last financial year Interplast began work in its 24th country, Mongolia, with the Australian Society of Anaesthetists. Mongolia has recently established a critical number of enthusiastic, young, advanced trained anaesthetists who, with the assistance of Australian anaesthetists, have the capacity and dedication to develop and maintain anaesthesia training

in Mongolia. A more detailed article on this venture will be available in the next edition of *Surgical News*.

In June 2009 over 100 Mongolian anaesthetists attended an 'Airways Management' course in Ulanbataar. With the assistance of AusAID, Interplast funded more than 30 from outlying provinces to attend, and training was delivered by six Australian anaesthetists. Importantly, this course also educated senior Mongolian anaesthetists to become future trainers.

The activities discussed above are in addition to the more traditional Interplast service and training programs providing life changing operations to indigent recipients and hands on training to local medical teams. Our list of activities for the 08/09 financial year includes

- Papua New Guinea, Rabaul/Bougainville — Jul 2008
- Samoa, Apia — Aug 2008
- Fiji, Taveuni — Aug 2008
- Nepal, Kathmandu — Sept 2008



Interplast volunteer Mr Darrell Nam and local nurse at the National Hospital, Solomon Islands

Melbourne surgeon Mr James Leong, Philippines



Melbourne surgeon Mr Russell Corlett training Nepalese surgeons in microsurgery

- Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby — Sept 2008
- Papua New Guinea, EMSB Training — Sept 2008
- Nine surgeons (five countries) to ASPS conference — Oct 2008
- Two Bangladesh OTs to Hand Therapy Conference — Oct 2008
- Sri Lanka, Colombo — Oct 2008
- Sri Lanka, Hand Surgery Educational CD—Oct 2008
- Kiribati, Tarawa — Nov 2008
- Philippines, Baguio City — Nov 2008
- Bangladesh, EMSB course — Nov 2008
- Philippines, Cagayan de Oro — Jan 2009
- Vietnam Quang Nam needs assessment — Feb 2009
- Laos, Xayabouly outreach program — Feb 2009
- Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City — Feb 2009
- Laos, Vientiane—Feb 2009
- Two Laotian doctors training (Perth) — Mar to May 2009

- Tonga, EMSB assessment — Mar 2009
- Papua New Guinea, Madang EMSB Course Apr 2009
- Bangladesh, Dhaka OT — Apr 2009
- Bangladesh, EMSB Course — Apr 2009
- Solomon Islands, Honiara — Apr 2009
- Nepal, Kathmandu — May 2009
- Tonga, Nuku'alofa — May 2009
- Bangladesh Needs Assessment — May 2009
- Bangladesh, Dhaka OT — May 2009
- Indonesia, Balikpapan — Jun 2009
- Fiji, Pacific Region EMSB course — Jun 2009
- Mongolia, Ulanbaatar — Jun 2009

These incredible achievements, that make a real difference both now and for the future, would not be possible without the passionate support of Interplast volunteers. We were pleased to welcome a number of new volunteers to the Interplast family this year and thrilled to welcome back those who have volunteered before.

Of course none of this would be possible without the financial support of our donors.

Rotary Clubs from around Australia and New Zealand continue to fund approximately one third of our annual activities in addition to the other support they provide. The Eureka Tower Climb held in Melbourne, and the Black and White Ball held in Sydney were successful fundraising events held last financial year, with plans afoot for more. Interplast continues to receive significant financial support from Cabrini and KCI Medical and is pleased to welcome Johnson & Johnson and Avant to our family of supporters among others.

As the need for the assistance of Australian and New Zealand medical volunteers remains high, and Interplast continues to expand, we depend now more than ever on donations to deliver these services. Please consider improving the lives of those in need in our region by improving their access to surgical care by making a donation to Interplast. All donations are tax deductible, change lives now, and build health systems for the future.