



Interplast[®]

Repairing bodies & rebuilding lives
in the Asia Pacific region

SUPPORTER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT REPORT

SAMOA SURGICAL & TRAINING PROGRAM 2019

ROTARY CLUB OF MORNINGTON

Recognising Your Impact

As a valued supporter of Interplast Australia & New Zealand, the generosity and support of the Rotary Club of Mornington directly benefited developing communities both in Savaii & Apia by partnering with Interplast to provide the necessary funds to deliver our most recent program in Samoa.

Thank you for your dedication to changing futures.

Your support has allowed our volunteer medical team to continue to undertake life-changing work alongside our local medical partners. This report provides a brief overview of the positive impact made possible through your involvement.

Following the success of this program, Interplast will continue to increase our reach; providing patients with life-changing medical procedures that they would otherwise not be able to access, while building the capacity of medical staff through a combination of formal training and professional mentoring.

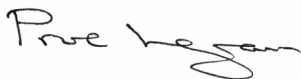
We hope that you are able to continue supporting us on this journey.

As you will see from this report, the program you supported was a highly successful one and will have both immediate and long-lasting positive outcomes for the people of Samoa.

We cannot thank you enough for your assistance.

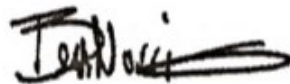
If you would like any further information about the program, or how your funding was used to repair bodies and rebuild lives please contact Interplast at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Prue Ingram

Chief Executive Officer
Interplast Australia & New Zealand



Dr Ben Norris

Samoa – Country Program Coordinator
Interplast Australia & New Zealand

Stats&facts

Samoa Surgical and Training Program

27th August – 8th September 2019

Malietao Tanumafili II Hospital,
Savaii & Tupua Tamasese
Meaole Hospital, Apia, Samoa



37%

of patients identified as
being female



134

Patient consultations



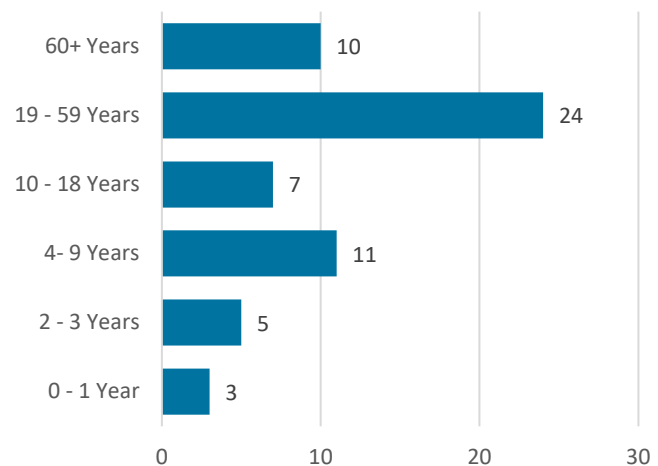
60

Surgeries performed



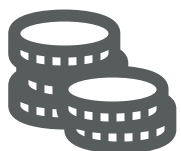
68

Participants trained



The greatest number of patients were aged

19 - 59 years



Your generous
contribution...

\$18,000



Value of volunteer
support...

\$93,885*

**Interplast volunteers supporting this program provided their time and talents on a pro bono basis. Based on their hours of service, the value of their service would equal this amount if provided in Australia.*

A Significant Need

SAMOA COUNTRY INFORMATION:

One of the 17 countries where Interplast works the Asia Pacific region, Samoa is a sovereign state in the South Pacific.

Samoa lies south of the equator, about halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand, in the Polynesian region of the Pacific Ocean. The country consists of the two large islands of Upolu and Savai'i (which together account for 99% of the total land area) and eight small islets.

With a population in excess of 195,000 people, Samoa life expectancy at birth is 78 years for females and 72 years for males. Australian life expectancy at birth, by comparison, is 84 for females and 80 for males.

The infant mortality rate is 15 per 1,000 live births. Samoa health status is generally good, with total health expenditure per capita just US\$418¹, although non-communicable diseases are increasing along with injuries and wounds. Over the past two decades, Samoa has witnessed almost epidemic rises in coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and mature-onset diabetes. The growth of NCDs has been linked to changing diets, increased use of tobacco and alcohol, and limited public understanding of the associated health risks. Obesity is the most serious threat to health in Samoa, contributing to diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, loss of mobility and premature death from one or many of these causes.

PROGRAM HISTORY:

Interplast has been sending programs to Samoa since 1983, and since then the country program has generally included one annual surgical and training visit, with ad-hoc additional training opportunities for Samoan surgical trainees in Australia, New Zealand, or other Pacific Island countries such as Fiji. More recently, Interplast has been delivering specific nurse education programs, as well as mentoring for local physiotherapists.

Interplast currently supports two local general surgeons with an interest in reconstructive surgery, to develop their reconstructive surgical skills so that they can attend to the less complex plastics cases between Interplast visits. The local general surgeons and registrars are actively involved in Interplast visits and benefit from hands on training. This also applies to the local anaesthetic, nursing and physiotherapy staff.

Fast Facts

SAMOA

Capital:	Apia
Largest City:	Apia
Official Language:	English Samoan
Ethnic Groups:	92.6% Samoans 7% Euronesians 0.4% Europeans 0.1% East Asian
Formation:	Independence from New Zealand 1 January 1962
Area:	2,842 km ²
Population	195,843 (2016 census)

¹ World Health Organisation 2014

Changing Futures Together

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM:

The program aimed to provide plastic and reconstructive surgical treatment for patients and continue to train and mentor local surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and physiotherapists.

The team focused on the provision of life-changing surgeries and ensuring post-operative and rehabilitation support through training and mentoring of local staff to deliver sustainable change. Most of this team have been involved with Interplast's programs to Samoa for several years, ensuring that each visit is an opportunity to further build upon existing personal and professional relationships with local partners.

Prior to the visit, an Interplast trip announcement was made on local radio, social media and posters were displayed around the hospital. Local surgeon and coordinator, Dr Petueli Emose played a crucial role in pre-screening and collecting a list of patients for the Interplast team to see during their visit.



This year the program also included a five-day outreach visit to Malietoa Tanumafili II Hospital (MT2H) upon the recommendation put forward by our local partners at the Tupua Tamasese Meaole Hospital (TTMH) in Apia. This was scheduled ahead of the main program in Apia to allow for patients to be referred onto TTMH in case they were unable to be operated on in Savaii.

The more basic facilities in Savaii are not sufficient for complex reconstructive surgery. Dr Petueli Emose (General Surgeon from TTMH), Dr Lamour Hansell (Head of Anaesthesia from TTMH), one anaesthetic registrar and two theatre nurses travelled with the Interplast team of three (Dr Norris, Mary Jane & Norma) to Savaii to provide support. MT2H serves the island of Savaii which is the second main island in the country and home to around a third of the population. Interplast has visited Savaii in the past but only to carry out clinics and Interplast was the first to perform surgery (14 operations in total) under general anaesthesia since the recent renovation of the operating theatres at MT2H.

In Apia, the first day of the program was a busy patient consultation clinic – where over 80 patients from across the island of Upolu were screened by the team. This included new patients, as well as those who had been treated in previous years and had returned for follow-up. The following 4 days of the program were long, busy operating days, across which 46 life-changing reconstructive surgical cases were undertaken alongside the local surgical teams.

Volunteer physiotherapist, Katie, worked alongside the surgical team to provide teaching and mentoring to the local physiotherapy staff and support the surgical team through provision of rehabilitative support to relevant surgical patients, ensuring improved post-operative outcomes.

MEET THE INTERPLAST MEDICAL TEAM:

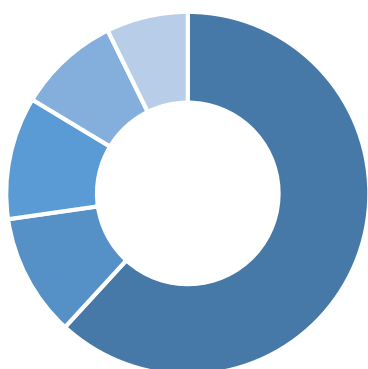
- Dr Ben Norris | Surgeon (NSW)
- Dr Damian Marucci | Surgeon (NSW)
- Dr Alan Goodey | Anaesthetist (NZ)
- Ms Norma Schwalger | Nurse (NSW)
- Ms Caroline McLoughlin | Nurse (VIC)
- Ms Mary-Jane Laing | Nurse (NSW)
- Ms Katie Anjou | Physiotherapist (VIC)

Understanding Our Work

During the Samoa program, the Interplast volunteer team worked alongside local medical partners to undertake 60 surgical procedures. These included, but were not limited to:

Procedure	Basic Explanation
Cleft lip repair	Cleft lip is a gap in the upper limb. If on one side it is a unilateral cleft lip, if on both sides, bilateral. The plastic surgeon makes an incision on each side of the cleft lip to the nostril. The two sides of the lip are then stitched together by re-arranging the local tissue. In addition to closing the lip, the repair includes realigning the muscle of the upper lip to provide normal lip function and facilitate sucking.
Cleft palate repair	Plastic surgeons connect the muscles of the soft palate and rearrange the tissues to close the cleft. This surgery requires general anaesthesia and a short hospital stay for recovery.
Burns reconstruction	The goals of reconstructive burn surgery are to improve both the function and the cosmetic appearance of burn scars. This involves altering scar tissue, with both non-operative and operative treatment.
Upper limb surgery	This encapsulates a range of surgeries undertaken to restore the function and appearance of the hand. This involves treating patients with hand injuries, degenerative disorders, and birth defects of the hand.

PROCEDURES PERFORMED:



- Skin lesions & soft tissue deformities
- Cleft lip & palate
- Head & neck
- Burns
- Upper limb

DIFFERING NUMBERS:

Although Interplast volunteers would like to assist every individual who presents for a consultation, there are numerous reasons why this proves not to be possible.

Primarily, surgical intervention will only be undertaken if:

- Follow-up care is appropriate and can support the needs of the individual
- The surgery will restore a level of function – cosmetic outcomes are not the immediate priority
- The surgery will positively impact the patient. Not all surgical intervention is a good idea.

Stories of Success

INTRODUCING ANULAGI

One of the first patients seen by the team during the clinic was 3-year-old Anulagi who had a unilateral cleft lip. Anulagi is young bright boy full of energy but his cleft lip was starting to affect his speech and he was becoming aware of his difference to other children. His caring mother, while understandably nervous, was very keen for him to get the surgery. Both were comforted by Dr Damian Marucci, who, through his visits to Samoa over many years, has picked up quite a bit of Samoan language.



Dr Marucci repaired the cleft lip alongside local surgical registrar Dr Junior Posini. The operation was an overwhelming success and by the following day Anulagi was up and about and ready to head home. His mother was incredibly pleased with the result and was looking forward to being back home with the rest of the family. She was relieved Anulagi would now be able to look forward to a similar future to that of his siblings and friends.



3

Years old



1

Procedure Received

Stories of Success

INTRODUCING ROPATI



Ropati has Neurofibromatosis Type 1. This is a congenital condition which results in the growth of multiple tumours along the nerves in his body. For the past few years, a neurofibroma has been growing above his right eye, completely blocking the vision on that side. Ropati had been living a very lonely life, working on a remote farm, and basically was kept away from other people. He had been "adopted" by a relative who brought him to the Interplast clinic to see if the team could do anything.

He had been operated on by the local surgical team a year ago, but with limited success and needed prompt intervention again.

Dr Marucci assessed Ropati and felt comfortable operating on him during the Interplast visit. Damian with the assistance of Dr Junior Posani carried out the debulking of the neurofibroma on the right upper eyelid.

They removed as much of the tumour as they could and the surgery went well. Thankfully his vision on his right eye was still intact and therefore, once his swelling goes down caused by the bruising from the surgery, he was expected to be able to see out that eye again for the first time in ages.



53

Years old



1

Procedures Received

A Lasting Legacy

A key feature of all Interplast programs is our commitment to building sustainable medical outcomes for the communities we serve by investing in the skill development and capacity building of local medical professionals in the following ways:

- Clinical teaching and mentoring took place continuously in theatre with one local general surgeon, one surgical registrar, one anaesthetic consultant and six theatre nurses.
- Anaesthetic nurse Caroline also took the opportunity at the request of the local nursing staff to deliver clinical teaching and update the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU) chart and implement a new neuro-obs chart. Four nurses participated in this teaching.
- Having a hand therapist on the team meant that treatment of Interplast surgical patients was made possible and ensured there was a robust follow-up plan for each patient. Teaching was delivered to the local physiotherapy department around the management of burns, following on from Interplast therapist teaching last year, and the concept of early referral to the therapists. Katie was also able to review scarring, splinting and rehabilitation protocols where relevant.

From Our Local Partners...

"Huge Fa'afetailava to those who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to make this trip successful"

Dr. Petueli Emose
General Surgeon - Samoa



With sincere thanks...

“The Interplast Samoa surgical program is the highlight of my year.”

*Dr. Damian Marucci
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon - Australia*

Thanks to the Rotary Club of Mornington for your enduring support for Interplast which changes futures.

If you would like to make separate use of any of the images in this report, please contact the Interplast office.



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Interplast Australia & New Zealand

250 – 290 Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE, VIC. 3002

+61 3 9249 1231
www.Interplast.org.au