**Dr Ian Nicholson AM**

**Cardiothoracic Surgeon**

Anyone who has saved another person’s life, whether as part of their vocation or through the necessity of circumstance, would understand how profound such an experience can be. So, when that tally of lives saved by an individual’s efforts reaches the 5,000 mark, you know something very special is going on. Such is the case with Cardiothoracic surgeon and 2016 Australian of the Year nominee, Dr Ian Nicholson, AM.

A member of Open Heart International since 1994, Ian sets aside his busy schedules at Sydney’s major hospitals, including Sydney Adventist Hospital – where he gives countless Australians a second chance at life – and travels to developing countries, including Fiji, Vanuatu, PNG, the Solomon Islands, Rwanda and Bolivia, to save even more lives, develop local teams and pass on his wealth of knowledge and experience to others.

Ian received his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at Sydney University back in 1988, became a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and carried on his surgical training at Westmead & Concord Hospitals. He has completed advanced training in all aspects of adult & paediatric cardiothoracic surgery – his specific interests include; Structural Heart Disease, Congenital Heart Disease, Surgical Correction of Arrhythmias, Thoracic Surgery and Deformities.

Dr Nicholson is a mentor and trainer of local & international medical teams. At every available opportunity, even resorting to consultancies via Skype, he passes on his skills & knowledge to help them gain self-sufficiency. This includes the organization of delivery of donated medical machinery, through Open Heart International, to empower those he mentors even further with the equipment they desperately need.

His ‘production line’ surgery sessions are legendary in the profession, enabling more people than ever in developing countries with treatable congenital heart conditions to receive the gift of long, healthy life and the opportunity, who knows… perhaps to be inspired by his passion in helping them, that they become part of the next generation of surgeons, continuing his great legacy.

A truly selfless and compassionate individual, impacting his profession and the wider world immeasurably, the heart surgeon with a ‘heart of gold’, Dr Ian Nicholson AM, is most deserving of this 2018 District 9685 Vocational Award