

**Overseas Specialist
Surgical Association
of Australia (OSSAA)**

**Rumah Sakit St Rafael and St Damian, Cancar,
Manggarai, Flores, NTT**

1 – 9 September 2023

TEAM LEADERS REPORT

Dr Mark Moore, AM, FRACS

Plastic and Craniofacial Surgeon

INTRODUCTION:

OSSAA surgical teams have been visiting the hospital and rehabilitation complex of St Rafael and St Damian at Cancar on the Indonesian island of Flores since 2002. With the onset of Covid-19 our team has been unable to return to this location since March 2019. During this enforced hiatus the facility remained largely intact and functioning in a relatively normal manner allowing for the effects of the global pandemic.

In the interim two visits from Indonesian cleft surgical teams have occurred to St Rafael Hospital, with funding support from the large USA-based charity Smile Train- these short missions focused solely on cleft patients.

With a return to normal activities post-Covid, Sr Franseline SSpS the sister in charge of the St Damian facility initiated contact with Ms Anastasia Stain our coordinator/ interpreter to request OSSAA teams to return. A written letter of invitation was provided by Dr Marianus Ronald Susilo, M.M., MARS, the head of St Rafael Hospital, and support from the Bupati of Ruteng was similarly forthcoming.

TEAM MEMBERS

OSSAA team

Dr Mark Moore – Plastic and Craniofacial Surgeon
Dr Andrew Wallace – Anaesthetist
Sr Vanessa Dittmar – Theatre nurse
Sr Josephine Luke- Anaesthetic and Recovery nurse
Ms Anastasia Stain – Coordinator / Interpreter
Keagan Wallace – Observer

Counterparts – RS St Damian / St Rafael

Dr Elisabeth Ene Jawan- General Practitioner – Jakarta

The nursing staff of St Rafael Hospital, in particular Pak Dony and Ibu Sabina were exceptional in their commitment and support of the team throughout the 5 days of surgery.

Sr Franseline, Pak Ferdi Jelalu and Ibu Mery Moi who oversaw the assessment clinic and the pre and post-operative management of the patients in St Damian.

ITINERARY:

Friday 1 September	Depart Adelaide for Denpasar via Melbourne
Saturday 2 September	Depart Denpasar for Labuanbajo on Batik Air. Visit Binongko complex, before onward travel to Cancar. Patient consultations on arrival -25 patients assessed.
Sunday 3 September	Patient consultations- 168 patients assessed and preliminary operating lists developed. Lunch at St Damian with the Bupati of Ruteng and his staff. Operating theatre / anaesthetic machine prepared.
Monday 4 September	Operating list commenced – 10 cases
Tuesday 5 September	Operating list continued – 9 cases
Wednesday 6 September	Operating continues- 11 cases
Thursday 7 September	Operating continues – 10 cases
Friday 8 September	Operating continues – 10 cases Farewell dinner with Sr Franseline
Saturday 9 September	Team visits Ruteng to see the SSpS Adoration Sisters and the Provincial residence of SSpS sisters. Depart Cancar for Labuanbajo by road, with onward flight to Denpasar. Depart Denpasar to Melbourne, and onward to Adelaide
Sunday 10 September	Arrive Adelaide from Melbourne.

OVERVIEW:

This return visit to the St Rafael/ St Damian complex is the first since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and occurred following an approach from Sr Franseline, SSpS our long term counterpart there. She arranged an appropriate letter of invitation for our OSSAA team from the St Rafael Hospital medical director and had support from the Bupati of Ruteng and his health authorities.

Over the 4 year period since our last visit there had been two short term cleft surgical missions by Indonesian surgeons, funded under the banner of the US-based cleft charity Smile Train – in 2021 and 2022. There had with these teams been no reconstructive surgical inputs provided for any other plastic and reconstructive surgical issues.

Prior to the teams arrival notification of our surgical mission was disseminated within the region resulting in upwards of 250 patients being registered for assessment. Arriving in Cancar on Saturday afternoon after a short detour to see the staff and residents at Binongko, we were welcomed by Sr Franseline and her staff. After a short rest an initial consultation clinic commenced, with 25 patients being reviewed and nine being placed on the surgical list.

The Sunday consultation process started about 9 am. By days end we had seen another 168 patients, with a wide range of pathologies, ranging from a variety of advanced malignancies (breast, head and neck, eye) through many benign skin and soft tissue tumours to a series of burn deformities/ contractures and more than 50 cleft lip and palate patients. Surgical lists were created for the upcoming week, with 50 patients identified as suitable for treatment. A large number of the patients with benign skin and soft tissue lesions were waitlisted for a future visit. Referrals were made with the assistance of Dr Elizabeth and Sr Franseline for those more extensive benign and malignant tumours that are beyond the capacity of St Rafael/ St Damian to deal with. The day was broken up by a lunchtime visit from the Bupati of Ruteng, his wife and other members of the regional government executive. Over our meal the Bupati thanked the team for their commitment to the patients of the area, and enquired as to the timing of a follow-up visit as well as possible Orthopedic and ENT surgical services.

During the afternoon consultation I had the opportunity to meet one of my old Cancar patients Dorfi once again. Almost 20 years ago we saw him at St Damian with a large expansile benign fibro-osseous tumour involving his midface and eye socket. Too big to treat there OSSAA and Edwardstown Lions arranged for him to come to Adelaide where we were able to operate on him at Calvary North Adelaide Hospital. He remains well and it was lovely to meet his wife and three daughters.

Our anaesthetist and nursing staff were able to leave consulting mid-afternoon and start the set-up of the theatre complex with our local theatre unit head Pak Dony. Consumables and supplies left in storage since our last visit in 2019 were also retrieved- sorting through what was still suitable for use. The larger, more modern anaesthetic machine was tested and whilst thought to be in full working order, was

actually leaking gases, so that we eventually used the older simpler 'Soft Lander' machine, which has seen action with our teams for the best part of 20 years.

Surgery commenced on Monday morning, with 10 cases operated on this first day. Ibu Sabina and Pak Dony, the local theatre staff assisted at all surgeries throughout the week, seamlessly slotting into our teams routine as if it were only yesterday that we were last there, rather than the 4 years it has been. The operating days were a little longer than we would normally like, reflecting the volume of cases presenting after our long absence. Dr Liz assisted our team both from the surgical and anaesthetic perspective, probably gaining most from participating in and becoming familiar with intubating patients for anaesthetic for cleft surgical repair, as well as using the laryngeal mask where appropriate.

After 5 days operating the team had completed 50 surgical procedures. This included 34 cleft related operations, 28 of which were primary surgeries. Cleft palate repair was the most commonly performed operation – 17 primary and 3 secondary procedures. This perhaps reflects the activity of Smile Train funded surgical teams who have performed more cleft lip surgery. 11 primary lip repairs were undertaken and 3 lip revisions on older cases wanting an aesthetic improvement. There remain a number of other cleft patients who will require revision in the future because of poor outcomes from their primary repair – these have come from a number of different locations.

A small number of burn scar/ contracture cases were treated, the most significant being a young man with an anterior neck contracture that had been present for some years resulting in changes to the growth of his lower jaw. He was released and skin grafted, with his post-operative splinting to be managed by Pak Ferdi and his physiotherapy colleagues at St Damian.

The remainder of the surgical caseload included several minor congenital hand and feet anomalies, a number of large benign tumours and lastly three advanced skin cancers on the face which required skin graft or skin flap reconstruction. The latter reflect the lack of understanding about skin cancer due to its rarity in this population with pigmented skin as well as issues of access to appropriate surgical care.

During the week the team had a visit from the Medical director of St Rafael, reaffirming his support for our teams work, whilst on Friday evening we were joined in a farewell dinner by the head of the St Rafael Emergency Department.

On the Saturday before our departure we had the opportunity to review the remaining cases still at St Damian, providing instructions to Sr Franseline and Pak Ferdi about post-operative management – particularly relating to the burn contracture cases. They have also arranged for review the following week of our cases to perform the appropriate wounds checks and advice on scar management.

Prior to departure for Labuanbajo the team had the opportunity to visit the provincial headquarters of the SSpS sisters in Ruteng, and meet with a number of the sisters who have in the past worked with our team at St Damian. The road trip to Labuanbajo was quick and uneventful with onward flights to Denpasar late on

Saturday afternoon. Overnight flights then to Melbourne and then Adelaide saw us return home on Sunday afternoon.

Recommendations are made for the reconstructive surgical team to return early in 2024, with the possibility of adding orthopedic and ENT surgical services where they can be sources and funded to respond to local requests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Particular thanks is due to the theatre nursing staff of St Rafael who endured long days unfailingly with our team, not having been in theatre since January this year. Also to the sisters and staff of St Damian who kept the patients safe and sound during a long week
Lastly to the OSSAA team members who performed expertly throughout the visit.

CLINICAL SUMMARY

Total consultations :		193
- cleft patients	54	
- burn patients	14	
- congenital hand/ foot	10	
Total surgery :		50
Cleft surgery	34	
Burn surgery	4	
Congenital hand/foot	4	
Tumours/ masses	8	
Gender :	Male	32
	Female	18



Outpatient assessment clinic soon after arrival at St Damian



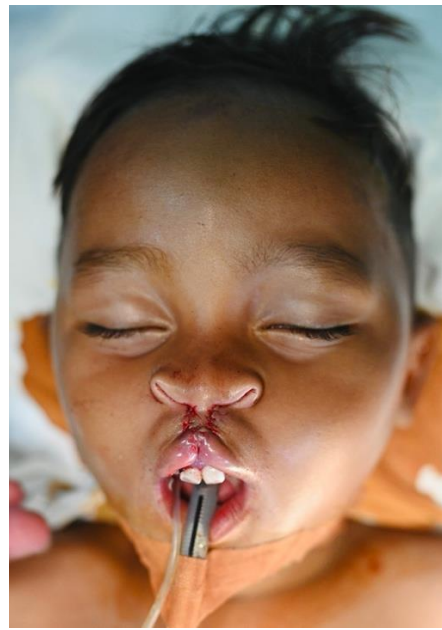
Sr Franseline standing before the mural painting of Sr Virgula at St Damian



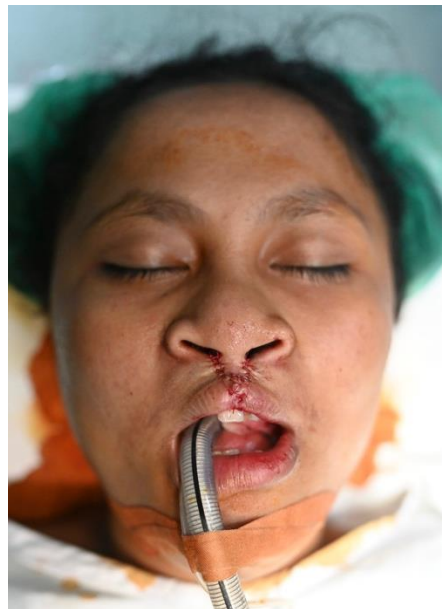
Meeting with Dorfi (previously treated in Adelaide 20 years ago) and his wife and three daughters



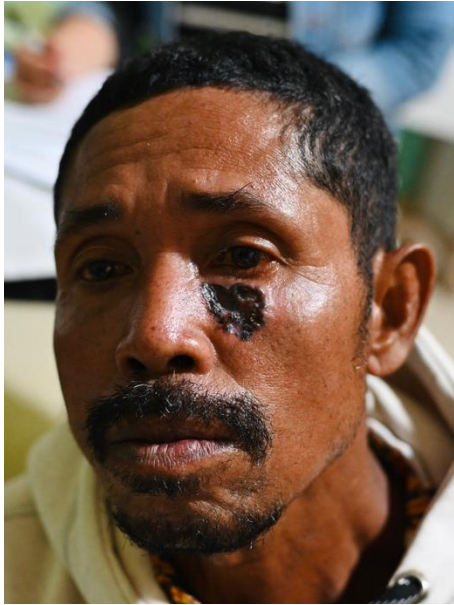
Young female with Left cleft lip and palate first treated in 2008 and following up in 2023



Three year old boy with bilateral complete cleft lip and palate – pre and post lip repair.



20 year old patient with previous cleft lip repair undergoing revision with complete redo including muscle repair



Male patient with large pigmented basal cell carcinoma on the left cheek excised and reconstructed with a full thickness graft.



Male patient with large pigmented basal cell carcinoma on the upper lip and nostril sill reconstructed with a local flap from the lower lip.



Farewelling the team at weeks end