

DAISI report for trip 13th to 19th Nov 2019

On request from the NRH surgeons, I travelled to Honiara to treat patients with rectal cancer. Initially 8 patients which was reduced to 5 for the usual reasons. All cases were advanced and required permanent or temporary stoma formation after resection. All patients recovered from their procedures and have been discharged from hospital. As part of the service provided Dr Basil Scott Siota and myself performed what I am told is the first laparoscopic stoma formation in the Solomon Islands. I was able to replenish the supplies of stoma appliances courtesy of stomal therapist Amanda McGee RN. With a suitcase full of appliances.

The trip was in the shadow of the Pacific Games with the opening ceremony being held on the 19th in the new 70-million-dollar stadium. The NRH has had some improvement work done on it in the last 12 months. A new Medical HDU, funded by the Australian Government was opened earlier in 2023 by the Deputy Prime Minister the Honourable Richard Marles. It recently was used for postop supervision of neurosurgical patients who had been treated by an eighteen-strong Sydney neurosurgical team, A new surgical ward had been refurbished for possible use during the Pacific Games. This will be of benefit after the Games are complete.

Both America and China had hospital ships USSNS MERCY which arrived on the 16th of November to support the health system during the games and the Chinese naval hospital ship the PEACE ARK which visited on August 19th. Other areas had been improved and a recent verbal report suggested that the New Zealand government had allocated funds for rat eradication at NRH.

Over 200 amputations continue to be performed in NRH the majority as a result of Diabetic Foot Disease. Education at a local level is a key factor in prevention. DAISI has been instrumental in coordinating efforts for training SI nurses and doctors (funded in the first instance by Irish Aid) and working with Professor Viv Chuter to introduce a nurse training module to Solomon Island University. Discussions with DFAT are ongoing with a comprehensive plan to be developed for a funding model in this area. DAISI exists in a crowded aid environment in the Solomon islands with 22 different Aid teams attending in 2023. Francis Kennedy is now the aid team visit and medical student elective coordinator fkennedy@nrh.gov.sb All future DAISI visits will be flagged with Francis

Education remains a major priority.

Areas include Breast Cancer Surgery and treatment update,
A general overview of treatment guidelines and advances in general surgery subspecialties. Suited to a recent successful fellowship candidate.

In regard to education, a mention should be made of Dr Maddie Gramlick a 4th year SET trainee funded by AVI, who has spent the last 4 months organising the logistics of laparoscopic surgery in NRH. She has successfully launched a training program for the local surgical registrars in diagnostic laparoscopy and laparoscopic appendicectomy. Importantly 3 laparoscopic towers and equipment have been donated by the USSNS MERCY to the NRH giving an increased opportunity to advance laparoscopy in this setting. Dr Gramlick is leaving her position shortly but through DAISI will continue her work in the Solomon Islands.