

HUMPTY in EAST TIMOR



DAY 5

Our guest blogger today from Timor.....drum roll.....Sydney Children's Hospital nurse Paul Hunstead.

Today the medical and nursing contingent of the Humpty Dumpty team ventured to Baceau (three hours east of Dili) to see first hand the state of the second largest hospital in Timor.

The team squeezed into the back of a good old Aussie ute for the three-hour journey to Baceau.

The country-side was a stark contrast to the hustle bustle of Dili.

Baceau was settled by the Portuguese and has a very different feel to downtown Dili.

Coconut palm huts replace the canvas tents of the Internally Displaced People camps which are such a common site housing more than 25000 people in Dili.

The political unrest of East Timor was particularly evident the further we travelled out of Dili and was best illustrated in Metinaro by an abundance of Fretlin (former government) flags that were flying in the streets.

Sadly we were not surprised by the conditions at the Baceau Hospital – it was a similar condition to the other district hospitals we have visited without any modern facilities.

The 30-bed paediatric ward was at near capacity with many of the children acutely ill with cerebral malaria, malnutrition and respiratory diseases. There was no sign of any form of monitoring or life-saving equipment.

We met a young Timorese paediatrician who was desperate to get help for a young child with a kidney tumour. Sadly, there is no access to specialised cancer care in Timor.

“The families seem to maintain their dignity in the face of such adversity,” said Dr Ralph Hanson, from The Children’s Hospital, Westmead.

“The doctors and nurses continue to impress they way they deal with these sick kids with limited medical support and equipment.

HUMPTY in EAST TIMOR



“The good news is they are building a new hospital which will be ready at the end of next year – the locals are so excited about that.”

The trip to Baceau helped us further understand how we can help to make a difference in the lives of Timorese children.

The afternoon was capped with a game of touch football with the Humpty team joining the NZ Police against the NZ army, air force and the Samoan army with the yours truly starring (is it going to hurt tomorrow!)

The ANZAC tradition was alive and the experience highlighted the Commitment of all sectors of the global community to improve living conditions for the Timorese.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The Humpty Dumpty Foundation is compiling a Wish List to help the children of East Timor.

A team of five expert medicos are in Dili this week identifying how the foundation's money can best be spent.

Stay tuned for the Wish List and if you want to help Humpty Dumpty's bid to assist our Timorese neighbours contact angela.garniss@humpty.com.au

ends