

The annual exchange visit from St John of God Hospital occurred on 18th - 27th September, 2007. It included

John Macdonald	- Team leader, ICU nurse / manager.
Carolyn Mornane	- Surgical nurse / Wound care specialist.
Michelle Franc	- Hospital Information System manager.
Matthew Lyttle	- Electrical engineer.
Ed Hingeley	- Biomedical engineer. (Alfred Hospital, Melbourne)

All team members were warmly and enthusiastically welcomed back by our Tongan colleagues. Ed Hingeley from the Alfred joined our party this time having exchanged via the program by himself in 2006, and with John Macdonald concentrated on the development of mechanical ventilation in the ICU.

Two 'Star' paediatric / neonatal ventilators sourced by Ed and shipped via the twinning program in January were serviced. One unit was commissioned and immediately put to use ventilating a baby delivered prematurely who failed respiratory support via nasal CPAP. Normally a terminal development, it was pleasing to see this baby survive with ventilation support and the care given by unit staff. His parents named him Mana, which translates to 'miracle' in English. A second six month old baby with severe meningitis and very poor prognosis also survived after a week of ventilation support on a Servo ventilator. **This was the first time in Tonga's history that two patients were ventilated at the one time. Both were critically ill babies, and both survived. It is a milestone achievement for this unit!**

In general the ICU has progressed well. There remains a dedicated core of senior nurses supported by graduates of the ICU course from 2006. Anaesthetic staff from theatre continue to support the unit and morale appears high within this multi disciplinary team. Equipment standards have improved and the physical environment has improved remarkably with the occupation of the new hospital building.

Accident and Emergency review.

Following recommendations of 2006, nursing administration have restructured the A&E senior nursing positions. This has resulted in significant improvements to the functioning of the department. In particular the triage system is exceptional and a more patient focused approach is now evident. (The triage system has even been introduced to the dental department!).

In summary:

All members of the team felt they have achieved their objectives. They again felt welcomed by our hosts who have strived to make our visit both successful and memorable. There appears a strong mutual feeling that the Twinning Program continues to be a success and general consensus that it would be beneficial for it to continue.

Exchange team from Tonga from the 15th of November to the 13th of December included

1. Mrs. Lineti Fakauho ICU Charge Nurse
2. Mrs. 'Atimoa Me'afo'ou Medical Ward Nurse
3. Ms. Salote Liava'a Medical Records personnel
4. Ms. Elsie Tupou Secretary/ Personal Assistant to the acting PM, Dr Viliami Tangi



A further very successful tour, which visited our club and the Rotary Club of Ballarat South to update them on developments.

The next exchange will wait until renegotiation of the next three year exchange, between AusAID, Vaiola Hospital and St John of God Hospital. It is expected that the agreement will be signed in October this year for another three year program



John Oswald, Vaiola Hospital Program Co-ordinator.