

Plans, people and patients

We've been busy!

Major media coverage, patient successes, a medical mission to Timor-Leste, a great new board recruit and our first strategic plan – these are just some of the things that have kept us busy in recent months.

We're thrilled to have recruited board member Professor Andrew Cochrane, a surgeon who has operated on a number of our patients, and who last year received an Order of Australia award for his work in Timor-Leste. (More about Andrew overleaf.)

We're also delighted to have signed off our first strategic plan, which will see our organisation and services grow and develop.

We'll be partnering to run fly-in surgical visits to Timor-Leste, increasing the number of patients we treat in Australia, supporting education and prevention programs and helping to skill up doctors and strengthen the health system in Timor-Leste. You can read more about our strategic plan on the next page.

But it's not all hard work – for those who like to have a great time for a good cause, we have some fun coming up with our first ever Sydney benefit event, a karaoke spectacular in Bondi later this month. Please read on for details!

– **Ingrid Svendsen,**
board chair

Success and satisfaction

Medical roundup with Dr Noel

It's been an eventful few months for the medical team.

Two patients had very successful procedures in September.

Young Jeca had a very severe narrowing of the mitral valve, and an extremely bleak outlook without surgery. Professor Rick Harper at MonashHeart dilated the valve, with an excellent result and immediate and dramatic improvement in his symptoms.

Agripino had a severely narrowed aortic valve skillfully repaired at Royal Melbourne Hospital.

We also ran very successful clinics in Dili and Baucau (in eastern Timor-Leste), identified a significant number of new patients suitable for treatment, and saw many of our previous patients, all of them doing very well.

Our next patient is Melinda, a 17 year old lass with a very leaky mitral valve. It's been a most satisfying and successful year.

– **Dr Noel Bayley,** **honorary medical
adviser**

Planning a healthy future

Just four years ago an outpouring of public support for patients Flavia and Ursula saw the birth of East Timor Hearts Fund. Since then we've provided life-saving heart surgery for more than 20 young people. All have returned to school, work and university, and can care for their families and contribute to their communities and country.

We're proud of what we've achieved with your support. But we know we can do more. We've spent a lot of time this year planning how we can expand to assist even more people.

The result is an ambitious three year strategic plan that will see us treat more patients in Australia; partner to run fly-in surgical visits to Timor-Leste; support education and prevention programs to help tackle rheumatic fever, a major cause of heart disease; and help develop health capacity and expertise in Timor-Leste.

We know we could comfortably continue with business as usual, assisting five or six patients a year.

But as an organisation we don't think that's the right thing to do when we know we have the skills, networks, energy and support to do much more.

We all strongly believe that we have a responsibility to do as much as we can to assist heart patients in Timor-Leste who have no other treatment options.

So we have made a decision to invest in building the capacity of our organisation. Some of this will be in simple things, like an online accounting platform, so that managing our finances is more efficient and reliable and donors do not have to wait for receipts.

We will also be investing in people. We will be engaging a part-time CEO, to supplement the work of our volunteers. *(continued overleaf)*

Three minutes with... Andrew Cochrane

Board member and surgeon



How and why did you become involved in East Timor Hearts Fund?

I have operated on a number of ETHF patients and in 2014 I was invited to join the board. My work in Timor-Leste began in 2003, when Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) asked me to join a paediatric cardiac team to East Timor. I'm now team leader on the annual visits. My surgical work exposed me to the broader situation in East Timor. I'm now a board member and major donor to Bairo Pite Clinic in Dili.

What does your role entail?

Since I have just joined the ETHF Board in late 2014, I will be feeling my way, but I think that it will be to help advise the board on the basis of my knowledge and contact with East Timor, and to help progress future plans, including negotiations to help achieve the first visiting open heart team to East Timor.

What do you do in your spare time?

Distance running, including Veterans competition; kayaking, including the annual Murray Marathon; swimming; and a range of philanthropic activities.

See Andrew's full bio on our website.

'I feel like a new person already!'

Our medicos are amazing, but we never doubt the healing powers of a good bowl of Agua-Sal ikan (Timorese fish soup) made by our Timorese-born patient support coordinator Ana Saldanha.

Coffee plantation worker and dad of one Agripino enjoyed a delicious bowlful the day after his tricky mitral valve repair operation in September. "I feel like a new person already! I can breathe so much easier now, and don't feel so tired," he said.

"Thank you so much for giving me a second chance in life. I am forever grateful for everything that ETHF and everyone involved has done for me, and the previous patients."



Photo: Memorial de Dare

Commandos on a mission!

Sincere thanks to all of the ex-servicemen and families who have donated to us in recent months, and especially ex 2/9 Commando Squadron member Harry Bell, who served in Timor-Leste. Harry has been on a mission to raise awareness about our work since seeing us on ABC TV, and as a result we've had some very generous donations.

One widow said her husband had high regard for the Timorese people "would have agreed with Harry wholeheartedly that we owe them an enormous amount...and have been somewhat lax in repaying our debt."

We are very moved that we have been chosen to help settle that debt of honor.

Our heartfelt thanks to Harry and all of the generous ex-service people and families supporting our work.

Planning a healthy future, con't

Our CEO will be responsible for running our organisation, implementing the strategic plan and ensuring that we have the resources to fulfil our program.

We will continue to rely on volunteers (including our unpaid board), and pro bono support from our corporate partners. We will always spend donors' money prudently, and we will strive to deliver the best patient results from the donations you so generously give. But we also know that we need to spend on things other than direct patient care to build the capacity to assist even more people in future.

We are here because of your support. We are proud of what we have achieved together. I hope you share our sense of excitement and optimism for our future.

– Ingrid Svendsen, Board chair

PS: You can find more about our strategic plan at www.easttimorheartsfund.org.au/our-plan/. If you have any questions please get in touch.



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Now I dream of being a doctor, says Jeca

Jeca, 11, our youngest ever patient, had simple hopes before arriving in Australia for a life-saving mitral balloon procedure. He wanted to ride his bike, go back to school and play with his friends. After his successful procedure, Jeca found a new ambition. "I would like to be a doctor one day. That is my dream!"

Jeca returned to Timor-Leste heart last month with his new heart. Before he left, he had some amazing experiences, including his first ever train ride, and meeting a kangaroo at the zoo.

Before they flew out Jeca's mum Marquita extended an invitation to all of our ETHF family: "I hope that you all come and visit me in Timor-Leste one day so that I can cook you all some corn free of charge as a way of saying thank you again for everything."

Jeca in the news!

Go to the latest news page of our website to see Jeca on ABC's Foreign Correspondent program, on ABC news and ABC online.

Rock the Heart of Bondi

Karaoke for a cause!

SING IN A LIVE BAND PRESENTS...

ROCK
THE HEART OF
BONDI

WIN \$1000

Join Sing in a Live Band for open mic karaoke fun PLUS your chance to WIN \$1000 in the live karaoke sing off!

Barbecue dinner and drinks available for purchase. All proceeds to East Timor Hearts Fund, providing life-saving heart surgery in Australia for young people from East Timor.

Tickets selling fast. **BOOK NOW!**
Tickets and Info at Trybooking.com
Bondi Pavilion, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Bondi Beach.

FRI 21ST NOV
DOORS OPEN 7:30

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Australians supporting a healthy Timor-Leste

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On 21 November we're going to **Rock the Heart of Bondi** at a karaoke spectacular to raise funds for our work. Tickets are limited and selling fast, so please book now at Trybooking.com.

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A huge thanks to our friends Nous Group, especially senior consultant Richard Ainley, for their invaluable pro bono assistance in developing our 2014-17 Strategic Plan.

