

Rejuvenated leader

New CEO 'invigorated and amazed'

I'm now at the end of week four as CEO of East Timor Hearts Fund – wow what an organisation!

As expected, it's been a busy start to my work but I feel rejuvenated and invigorated to be surrounded by such an amazing group of people. The highlight so far was accompanying Dr Noel Bayley and the volunteer medical team to Dili for screening clinics. It was an emotional trip. Seeing the dedication of the volunteers and partners as they went about their work filled me with an enormous sense of pride. It was also my first visit to Dili after a few years. To return to the place I remembered so fondly filled me both with a sense of nostalgia but also urgency that there is so much work yet to be done. Now back in Australia we

start the process of arranging life-saving surgery for patients identified at the clinics, a task that I know many of you are involved with. It has been made clear to me in the past four weeks that the positive outcomes for those receiving treatment would not be possible without the efforts of our committed volunteers, partners and supporters. For that I thank you. I am with you!

– **Stuart Thomson**
Chief executive officer

PS: If you'd like to know more about my background please see my bio below (a full version, and a video of my recent trip to Timor-Leste, is on our website.)

Old friends and new

Medical roundup with Dr Noel Bayley

Since I last wrote, we've had a busy and productive time.

Alia had a double valve repair at Royal Children's Hospital two days before Christmas. Earlier this month I saw her in Dili. I am pleased to say that the result, at this stage, looks excellent.

In late February and March the volunteer medical team had a very busy week. We screened around 200 patients in Dili and Suai, southwest of the capital.

As always many old friends came in for review; almost all with outstanding outcomes.

We also identified a large number of new patients, about a dozen of whom are excellent candidates for life-saving surgery in Australia.

We'll be busy in the next few months coordinating their care with our partner hospitals.

On this trip we were also accompanied by biomedical engineer Gordon Szegi, who installed cardiac equipment that East Timor Hearts Fund has donated to Guido Valadares Hospital. Gordo also did a great job and made many friends repairing some malfunctioning gear at the hospital.

Thank you for your support.

– **Dr Noel Bayley**
Honorary medical adviser

Get involved!

Epic swim for healthy hearts



On the weekend of 17-19 March, our volunteer Paul Hoffman plans to swim 60 km, the equivalent of two

English Channels, to help us provide life-saving heart surgery. Find out more, donate and leave messages of support at everydayhero.com (search Baths 2 Baths swim).

Trek of a lifetime



A few spots still remain for the historic Trans-Timor Trek, led by paramedic and former peace-keeper Mick

Stuth. Details on our website.

A broken heart mended



We're proud to report that Alia, 15, is recovering well from her pre-Christmas surgery. Thanks to all who supported our crowdfunding campaign!

Three minutes with...

Stuart Thomson

Chief executive officer



How did you become involved in ETHF?

A former World Vision colleague told me about the great work of East Timor Hearts Fund. It's a perfect fit, as I have lived in developing countries including East Timor, am a trained nurse and have a very close personal experience with heart conditions.

What does your role entail?

As CEO I lead the day to day operations of ETHF. My job will be to build the fundraising and staff numbers while maintaining the great volunteers who are really the heart of ETHF. The combination of a small group of highly skilled employees combined with a strong base of committed volunteers will be a formidable force. I am looking forward to leading this transition so that we may mend more broken hearts together.

What do you do in your spare time?

After years of living and travelling all over the world I am happy to be closer to home, being a good role model for my kids. I love a good movie or to get away to the beach for a few hours for a swim, snorkel or surf.

Read Stuart's full bio on our website.