

Solomon Islands Dental volunteer visit in June 2023

Three volunteers visited the dental department of the National Referral Hospital in the capital, Honiara, on a dental volunteer visit in June 2023. The team consisted of Dr. David Goldsmith, Dr Deborah Sykes (Specialist Orthodontist), and John Macdonald (Intensive Care Nurse)

The Solomon Islands has a Prosthetics Lab., Steri room, and seven dental chairs which we installed in 2019 with ICD support. However, most consumables and instruments are in very short supply.

A 40-foot container of donations of Dental and Medical supplies and equipment, including boxes of children's picture books was shipped to Honiara in May 2023. The shipment included complete sets of specialist Oral Surgery instruments and equipment donated by retiring Ballarat Oral Surgeon Mr. Graeme Fowler

Specialist Oral Surgical instruments are the highest priority for support and were desperately needed by the dental department in the Solomon Islands. This donation has made a valuable contribution to health care provision at the National Referral Hospital and also to Outer Island provinces.

In addition to Graeme Fowler's Oral Surgery practice, other dental donations included autoclaves, hanging motors, stools, suction motors, trolleys, gloves, two Pallets of PPE such as biodegradable barriers, sucker tips, 10 new High-speed and 10 Low -speed handpieces, new burs, hand instruments, 1000 sets of Denture teeth, 200 forceps, 30 elevators, burs, Lab. Polishers, computers, an intra-oral camera, 3 overhead projectors, and IT equipment.



Rotary Donations-in-Kind depot in Melbourne added Gloves, Masks, Drapes, wheelchairs, crutches, 15 hospital beds, BP monitors, IV stands, commodes, walkers, chairs, schoolbooks, linen, PPE, 20 pallets of Elyptol hand sanitizer and arranged the shipping. There is an acute shortage of many dental and medical supplies at the hospital so these donations will make a real difference.

We are looking to send more supplies when funding allows.

The seven dental chairs installed at the Honiara National Referral Hospital in 2019 are still working well, and all are being used. The Solomon Islands now has a dental hospital, and dental specialists in the Solomon Islands can have their own rooms.

However, some equipment needed repairs or maintenance, such as the central suction motors. We made temporary repairs, and this essential item of equipment is now working in all the surgeries, but a priority would be to train a local engineer to do the dental maintenance and repairs. An advantage is most of the chairs are of the same A-dec models which are generally reliable and relatively easy to repair, and with spare parts available. This is in contrast to some donated Chinese dental chairs which seldom last very long and are not able to be repaired locally.

The power supply to the sterilizing room was improved by adding new power points and wiring. This enables the use of two autoclaves simultaneously which improves the efficiency of the dental clinics.



Cons. Room National Referral Hospital



Dr Deborah Sykes with NRH Steri Nurse



Dr. David Goldsmith with CDO
Dr. Ellison Vane

Many thanks to the ICD for supporting this project

Dr. David Goldsmith
Dr. Deborah Sykes
Mr. John Macdonald

National Referral Hospital, Honiara, Solomon Islands
June 2023