



Department of Health
Government of Western Australia



Royal Perth Hospital

Media Statement

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MEDIA RELEASE

RPH staff again provide international aid

Over two weeks in Indonesia, four Royal Perth Hospital staff members were involved in treating nearly 1,800 patients, completing 730 vaccinations and establishing seven field sites after the devastating May 27 earthquake.

A magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Indonesia's central island of Java on May 27, killing over 5,700 and injuring more than 45,000 people.

Western Australia deployed a 12-member team (including four Royal Perth Hospital staff) to work in Yogyakarta and surrounding areas, near the epicentre.

The RPH staff members included Emergency Department Nurse Angie Jackson, Emergency Department Nurse Muriel Leclercq, Physiotherapist Nick Buttigieg and Pharmacist and Health Logistician Julie McMorrow.

Emergency Department Nurse Muriel Leclercq said according to the United Nations Indonesia Earthquake 2006 Response Plan the earthquake directly affected 2.7 million people and rendered 1.5 million homeless.

Physiotherapist Nick Buttigieg was tasked to set up a rehabilitation training program for hospital based physiotherapists and develop an outreach program.

"By providing education and support for the local physiotherapists, we were able to ensure that staff were confident to continue the process of rehabilitation, in both the hospital and the field, once we returned to Australia," Nick said.

RPH Pharmacist and Health Logistician Julie McMorrow said she appreciated the opportunity to be part of an Australian Medical Assistance Team.

“It was great to be able to help out at village, hospital and public health levels, and to exchange information with our Indonesian colleagues,” Julie said.

“Team members were very proactive in dealing with injuries, infections and missed vaccinations, which had a huge potential impact on patient outcomes in the villages.”

Muriel said the patients truly appreciated the care given by the Australian teams and simple measures such as a Zimmer frame or wheelchair improved their mobility, social interaction and psychological healing.

“On behalf of the AMAT RPH staff I would like to thank RPH management for their support during the deployment and our colleagues who covered shifts and workloads whilst the team was deployed,” she said.