

Day 6 blog from Samoa, final days

The final day has come for half of the team who will be flying out late this afternoon. Yesterday the formal ceremony took place to bury the final few. The team worked in the morning and took the opportunity offered to visit the villages the tsunami destroyed.

There was a stark contrast between what we have seen so far of Samoa and the devastation that we saw at the villages. It was a very sobering trip and helped us to understand the size and nature of the wounds we saw in theatre. The people we saw waved and smiled and we were heartened by their incredible resilience.



Rebuilding already happening. Power lines going back up rapidly



A typical scene in the tsunami zone. We suspect corrugated iron caused a lot of the soft tissue injuries we saw.

One of the women we spoke to on the ward round told us she didn't "understand why God loved her so much". She had decided to dive into the river when she saw the wave coming but was battered by debris in the river. She sustained deep lacerations to her right arm and leg that required skin grafting but her eyes and her soul are bright and determined to live through this.



Debbie Ratima and Tenei (theatre charge nurse)

The children seem wise for their years and deeply respectful to all around them. They have recovered their high spirits which we saw today on the ward round when we saw a three year old boy who yesterday wouldn't even look at us, playing happily with his toys and giggling with us.



Andrea Jarocki and Debbie Ratima

Earlier this week April (McFarland) and Janine (Lee) were unsuccessfully trying to wake a very sleepy patient whose name was Moimoi. Using their best Samoan, they failed miserably to rouse him, unaware that his name Moimoi means sleep-sleep. Translated they were asking him to "sleep-sleep open your eyes, sleep-sleep open your mouth" and on it went. About an hour later, he woke and smiled at them.



Some of the many stores and equipment just arrived from New Zealand.

They are just completing the last two big cases before we prepare to leave. The girls will stop drinking at midday as there is only a portaloos on the Hercules, and whilst we have all shared many things that is something we have no wish to.

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The smell test is a common occurrence on the wards.