



World Child Cancer
No child should suffer

PROJECT FACTSHEET: Philippines

Project Centre: South Philippines Medical Centre (SPMC), Davao City, Mindanao

Twinning Centres: National University Hospital (NUH), Singapore
St Jude Children's Research Hospital, USA

Other Charity Partners: None

Project Leader: Dr Mae Dolendo, SPMC

Project Mentors: Dr Raul Ribeiro & Don Guimera, St Jude Children's Research Hospital
Dr Allen Yeoh, NUH

Start & End Date: May 2009 - April 2014



Dr Mae with a patient at SPMC

Background:

Over 1,100 cases of childhood cancer are expected in the Mindanao region annually but only around 100 are diagnosed at SPMC, which is the largest tertiary public hospital in the area. The centre has 25 dedicated paediatric oncology beds and treats predominantly leukaemias, solid tumours and retinoblastoma, of which there was a survival rate of 20% in 2008.



Staff at SPMC

Key Problems:

- Lack of awareness of the symptoms and curability of childhood cancer
- Late diagnosis and under diagnosis
- High rates of abandonment
- Poor accessibility as over 80% of patients live too far away to afford travel
- Lack of access to a reliable supply of affordable drugs
- No reliable childhood cancer database

Project Objectives:

- 1) Increase survival rates on the island to over 70% over 5 years
- 2) Reduce late diagnosis
- 3) Increase access to treatment
- 4) Reduce abandonment of treatment to less than 5%
- 5) Develop long-term sustainability in quality cancer care for children

Key Project Outputs:

- Establish 5 satellite centres to improve diagnosis and referral
- Implement a training programme in the early detection of symptoms
- Develop a community education campaign to improve early diagnosis
- Provide a reliable supply of drugs
- Establish a childhood cancer database
- Identify local funding sources to secure sustainability

Impact:

- All 5 satellite centres now operational for referrals and training
- Provision of a vehicle for patient transport
- 1-year survival rates almost at 70%
- Family support accommodation developed
- Public awareness campaign receiving public support and government attention
- Database of childhood cancer regularly updated
- New palliative care unit

