

Free Heart Surgeries for the Children of Fiji

Project Report

April 2019

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji

GIFT OF LIFE

LOVE ALL - SERVE ALL

SRI SATHYA SAI SANJEEVANI CHILDREN'S HEART SCREENING CENTRE

PROVIDING FREE HEART SCREENING TO THE CHILDREN OF FIJI AND THE PACIFIC

The Gift of Life project has helped **save 71 lives in the last 3 years** saving parents more than **$7.1Million**



















This Gift of Life heart surgeries is a project of Sai Prema Foundation Fiji (an NGO and Charitable Foundation formed to serve the underprivilged and needy people of Fiji through Medicare, Educare & Sociocare initiatives).

The Sai Prema Foundation Fiji undertook this initiative in collaboration with the Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services in and an international team of surgeons, doctors and medical professionals from India, Australia, USA & Oman representing the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals India.



17

children underwent open heart surgeries, catheterization lab procedures and other interventions in 2019 , saving their families in excess of **FJD$1.7million.**

Without intervention and treatment, these children may not have survived.





A suprise visit by members of Fiji Rugby 7s Team

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji offers its heartfelt gratitude to our nations heroes for taking time out to visit the children recovering from surgery.







The most beautiful thing in the world is a child's **smile**. The next best thing? Knowing that **You** are the reason **behind it**.









75 children

were screened completely free of cost for congenital heart disease at Sri Sthya Sai Sanjeevani Children's Heart Screening Centre at Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre.

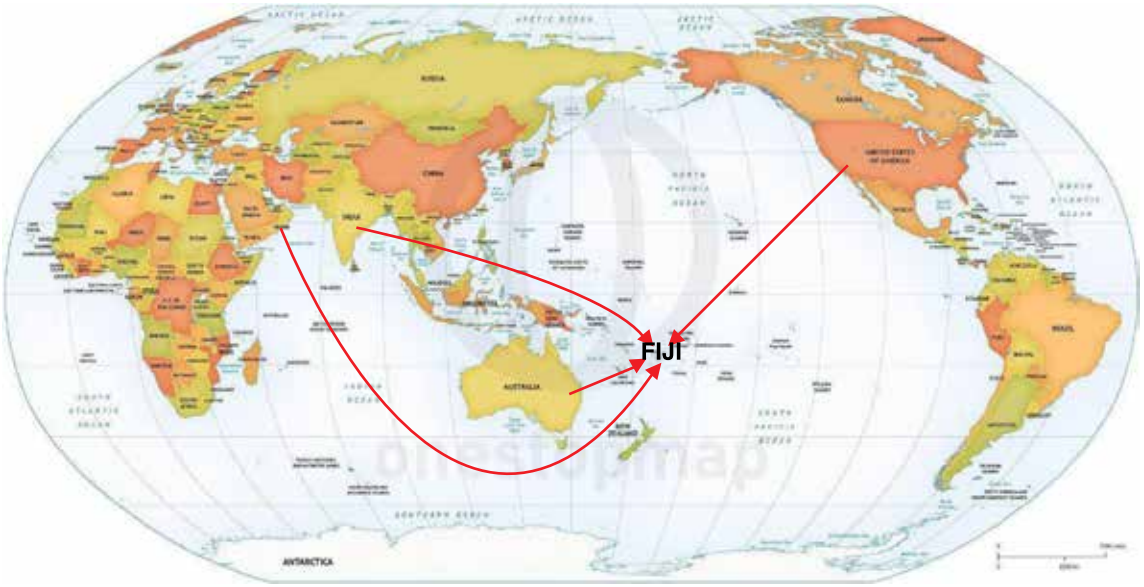






THE TRUE SAVIOURS

Fiji was blessed to have an International team of Surgeons, Doctors and Medical Professionals from India, Australia, USA & Oman representing the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital India to give a new "Gift of Life" to the children and their families.



The local team of Doctors who were the pillar of strength and support for the international team include **Dr. Krupali Tappoo** (*General Practioner and Director of Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre, Suva*), **Dr. Ilisapeci Vereti** (*Head of Department of Pediatrics, CWM Hospital, Suva*) & **Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai** (*Pediatric Registrar, CWM Hospital, Suva*).

Dr. Ashish Katewa
INDIA
Chief Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgeon and Director of Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Raipur

Dr. Shaun Setty
USA
Internationally renowned award-winning Pediatric and Adult Cardiothoracic Surgeon and Medical Director of both Long Beach Medical Centre and Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach, California, USA

Dr. Benjamin Anderson
AUSTRALIA
Pediatric Cardiologist and Interventionist at the Lady Cilento Hospital, Brisbane, Australia

Dr. Ranganathan Ananthasubramaniam
OMAN
Anesthetist, Intensivist, Senior Specialist and Assistant Head of Department of Cardiac Anaesthesia at the Royal Hospital in Muscat, Oman

Dr. Shivani Gajpal
INDIA
Anaesthetist/Intensivist at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Raipur, India

Mr. Alok Verma
INDIA
Surgeical Assistant, Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Raipur, India

Ms. Pooja Gupta
INDIA
Perfusionist at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Raipur, India

Ms. Sheeja Diwan
AUSTRALIA
ICU Nurse, Pediatric Intensive Care, Lady Colento Children's Hospital, Brisbane, Australia

Mr. Rizwan Husain
INDIA
ICU Physician Assistant at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Raipur, India

Mr. Rajveer Choudhury
INDIA
ICU Physician Assistant, Delhi, India

Mr. Sandy Tolentino
USA
Scrub Nurse, Long Beach Medical Centre, California, USA

Ms. Deborah Pegg
AUSTRALIA
Clinical nurse educator, pediatric Intensive Care, Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, Brisbane, Australia

Ms. Kym Stuart
AUSTRALIA
Cardiac Theatre Nurse and Surgical Assistant at the Lady Cilento Hospital in Queensland, Australia and recipient of Order of Australia Medal



Recipients of the Gift of Life free heart surgeries, 2019

1. **Name:** Skylar Lee
Age: 7 years
Procedure received: Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) Repair



Sumeet Tappoo, Dr. Krupali Tappoo, Ms. Kym Stuart, Dr. Ashish Katewa, Rajendra Kumar, Skylar Lee, Moira Lee, Varsha Kumar, Ms. Radhika Reddy (Asaleo Care), Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai, Soniya Lal, Mahendra Tappoo.

2. **Name:** Shinal Sharma
Age: 10 years
Procedure received: Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) Repair



Varsha Kumar, Rajendra Kumar, Shinal Sharma, Ritesh Sharma, Mr. Nandu Naidu (Punjas Ltd), Dr. Ashish Katewa, Ms Kym Stuart.

3. **Name:** Diana Lesumaivavalagi
Age: 8 and half years
Procedure received: Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) Ligation



Soniya Lal, Ms. Kym Stuart, Varsha Kumar, Dr. Ashish Katewa, Diana Lesumaivavalagi, Ben Naitavuni, Mahendra Tappoo, Aarti Peel, Sr. Pradeep Kuar, Jeannie Peel, Robin James, Jason Peel, John Peel.

4. **Name:** Ted Naisoro
Age: 6 and half years
Procedure received: Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) Ligation



Ms. Kym Stuart, Dr. Ashish Katewa, Jeannie Peel, John Peel, Michelle Myers, Varsha Kumar, Ted Naisoro, Lavenia Traill, Rajendra Kumar, Mahendra Tappoo, Dr. Krupali Tappoo Soniya Lal

5. **Name:** Ameer Ali
Age: 4 and half years
Procedure received: Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) Ligation



Ameer Ali, Asnoor Ali, Kishore Rathod, Bipin Rathod, Rizwan Husein, Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai, Soniya Lal.

6. **Name:** Alumita Totoka
Age: 3 years
Procedure received: Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) Ligation



Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai, Rizwan Husein, Dr. Shereen Azad Ali & Azad Ali (Island Accommodation), Alumita Totoka, Mereseini Totoka, Peni Totoka, Dr. Krupali Tappoo, Sumeet Tappoo.

Recipients of the Gift of Life free heart surgeries, 2019

7. **Name:** Mere Volau
Age: 5 years
Procedure received: Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) Ligation



Robin James, Namrata Tappoo, Aarti Peel, Mere Volau, Baseva Tubeta, Jason Peel, Jeannie Peel, Remal Tappoo, John Peel.

8. **Name:** Ratu Josese Tuira
Age: 5 and half years
Procedure received: Ventricular Septal Defect (VSD) Repair



Remal Tappoo, Ratu Josese Tuira, Talica Waqabaca, Namrata Tappoo

9. **Name:** Eric Raj
Age: 8 and half years
Procedure received: Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) Repair



Jyoti Tappoo, Eric Raj, Elvin Raj, Praveen Chand, Eric's Sister, Eric's Aunt, Kamlesh Tappoo

10. **Name:** Dinaomi Tinai
Age: 15 years
Procedure received: Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) Repair



Hema Rathod, Teresia Natoro, Dinaomi Tinai, Bharti Rathod

11. **Name:** Peter Sidi
Age: 2 years
Procedure received: Ventricular Septal Defect (VSD) Repair



Vikash Sundar, Indra Deo, Peter Sidi, Lyn Sidi, Mahendra Tappoo.

12. **Name:** Teninukai Kabutia
Age: 12 years
Procedure received: Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) Repair



H.E. Smt. Padmaja (Indian High Commissioner), Ann Pesaeli, Teninukai Kabutia, Sailasa Takali, Mahendra Tappoo.

Recipients of the Gift of Life free heart surgeries, 2019

13. **Name:** Kinisimere Takali
Age: 2 years
Procedure received: Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) Repair



H.E. Smt. Padmaja (Indian High Commissioner), Meri Lani, Kinisimere Takali, Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai, Soniya Lal, Mahendra Tappoo.

14. **Name:** Raynav Deo
Age: 3 years
Procedure received: Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) Repair



Kamlesh Tappoo, Raynav Deo, Shamni Deo, Ravinesh Deo, H.E. Ms. Melanie Hopkins (British High Commissioner), Remal Tappoo, Soniya Lal.

15. **Name: Etuate Lala**
Age: 3 months
Procedure received: Pulmonary Stenosis Dilation



Dr. Shivani Gajpal, Riwan Hussain, Kamlesh Tappoo, Etuate Lala, Ponipate Bainivalu, H.E. Ms. Melaine Hopkins (British High Commissioner), Soniya Lal, Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai Remal Tappoo.

16. **Name: Ashnit Prasad**
Age: 7 years
Procedure received: Pulmonary Stenosis Dilation



Pooja Gupta, Dr. Maryanne Kora'ai, Kavita Wati, Ashnit Aman Prasad, Mahendra Tappoo Soniya Lal, Riwan Hussain.

17. **Name: Britney Talei**
Age: 3 years
Procedure received: Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) Repair



Kamlesh Tappoo, Britey Talei, Siteri Marama, H.E. Ms. Melanie Hopkins (British High Commissioner), Remal Tappoo.



Recipients of the Gift of Life free heart surgeries, 2018

1. **Name:** Amelia Samunigawe
   Age: 10 days old
   Procedure received: Ballon Septostomy (PICU)

2. **Name:** Ilivani Gaunilau
   Age: 2 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

3. **Name:** Tomasi Senibiau
   Age: 5 months
   Procedure received: VSD Repair

4. **Name:** Mereseini Vulai
   Age: 10 months
   Procedure received: Chest drain inserted

5. **Name:** Ronika Sharma
   Age: 11 months
   Procedure received: TOF Repair

6. **Name:** Lavenia Cavora
   Age: 11 months
   Procedure received: Complete TOF repair

7. **Name:** Jhanvi Chand
   Age: 1 year
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

8. **Name:** Timaima Bainivalu
   Age: 1 year
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

9. **Name:** Aqela Cirimaitoga
   Age: 1 year
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

10. **Name:** Ansh Kumar
    Age: 1 year 2 months
    Procedure received: VSD & ASD Repair

11. **Name:** Litiana Teri
    Age: 1 year 2 months
    Procedure received: CoA Repair & PDA Ligation

12. **Name:** Bhavishra Reddy
    Age: 2 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

13. **Name:** Mareca Delaibatiki
    Age: 2 years 2 months
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

14. **Name:** Jokapeti Roko
    Age: 3 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

15. **Name:** Darsh Prasad
    Age: 3 years 3 months
    Procedure received: DCRV & VSD Repair. PFO closure

16. **Name:** Aarav Kumar
    Age: 5 years
    Procedure received: ASD Repair

17. **Name:** Ronav Chand
    Age: 5 years 9 months
    Procedure received: ASD Repair

18. **Name:** Shaniya Kumar
    Age: 6 years 2 months
    Procedure received: TAPVC Repair

19. **Name:** Nemani Mohammed
    Age: 6 years 2 months
    Procedure received: Pulmonary Balloon Valvuloplasty

20. **Name:** Mereani Suraki
    Age: 7 years
    Procedure received: PDA device closure

21. **Name:** Losalini Navila
    Age: 9 years
    Procedure received: ASD Repair Primary

22. **Name:** Ana Vitau
    Age: 9 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

23. **Name:** Josefa Siwatibau
    Age: 9 years 2 months
    Procedure received: VSD Repair

24. **Name:** Shreya Sukul
    Age: 11 years
    Procedure received: ASD Repair

25. **Name:** Mereoni Sagatoro
    Age: 11 years 2 months
    Procedure received: TOF Repair

26. **Name:** Lupe Tikomaisawani
    Age: 15 years
    Procedure received: Rt Glen, ASD closure & Rt Atrioplasty VSD Repair

Recipients of the Gift of Life free heart surgeries, 2016

1. **Name:** Elima Futu
   Age: 4 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

2. **Name:** Vika Marama
   Age: 6 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

3. **Name:** Ashley Dunn
   Age: 6 months
   Procedure received: VSD closure

4. **Name:** Pane Lovecena Talei
   Age: 9 months
   Procedure received: Intra-cardiac Repair of TOF

5. **Name:** Mitieli Laqere
   Age: 10 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

6. **Name:** Selina Tukana
   Age: 10 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

7. **Name:** Trissah Valentine
   Age: 1 year 1 month
   Procedure received: VSD closure

8. **Name:** Abdul Zohan
   Age: 1 year 3 months
   Procedure received: PDA Ligation

9. **Name:** Nihaal Singh
   Age: 1 year 4 months
   Procedure received: SV ASD closure & PAPV rerouting

10. **Name:** Sem Cagilau
    Age: 1 year 5 months
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

11. **Name:** Baby of Movina Sharma
    Age: 1 year 6 months
    Procedure received: VSD closure

12. **Name:** Rahiman Imrana
    Age: 1 year 6 months
    Procedure received: Bilateral Bidirectional CP shunt

13. **Name:** Kajol Chand
    Age: 3 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

14. **Name:** Furqan Faaz Hussaini
    Age: 3 years
    Procedure received: Intra-cardiac Repair of TOF

15. **Name:** Fausha Bibi
    Age: 4 years
    Procedure received: VSD closure

16. **Name:** Sione Simone
    Age: 4 years
    Procedure received: VSD closure

17. **Name:** Elenoa Koroi
    Age: 4 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation Chest drain

18. **Name:** Mereia Tinanitabua
    Age: 5 years
    Procedure received: ASD Repair

19. **Name:** Tale Yabaki
    Age: 5 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

20. **Name:** Rishant Prasad
    Age: 1 year 7 months
    Procedure received: Intra-cardiac Repair of TOF

21. **Name:** Manvi Manisha
    Age: 10 years
    Procedure received: Sandwich patch repair, SVC Patch Augmentation

22. **Name:** Vaceseva Ilibeva
    Age: 11 years
    Procedure received: VSD closure and RVOT muscle bundle resection

23. **Name:** Manoa Tinavou
    Age: 11 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

24. **Name:** Mere Nakata
    Age: 13 years
    Procedure received: VSD closure

25. **Name:** Margaret Fane Waqabata
    Age: 1 year
    Procedure received: VSD closure

26. **Name:** Pranisha Goundar
    Age: 1 year 8 months
    Procedure received: VSD closure

27. **Name:** Josphine Laddpeter
    Age: 15 years
    Procedure received: PDA Ligation

28. **Name:** Amayra Kumar
    Age: 10 months
    Procedure received: Bilateral Bidirectional CP shunt

Project Summary

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji under its Gift of Life program in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital India facilitated **Free Pediatric Congenital Heart Disease Surgeries** for the children of Fiji from the 29th April to the 8th of May 2019.

This was the third time that Sai Prema Foundation Fiji has facilitated the **free heart surgeries for the children of Fiji.** The previous visits have been in August 2016 where 23 successful heart surgeries were conducted and in April 2018 whereby a total of 26 surgeries and cardiac catheterisation procedures were conducted. 5 children were sent to India for surgery at Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital Raipur.

This year a 13 member international team conducted the children's Heart surgeries and screening led by **Dr Ashish Katewa**, a pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon from Sanjeevani Hospital in Raipur India. Five other team members came from India. This included **Dr. Shivani Gajpal** who is an anesthetist and intensivist, **Ms Pooja Gupta** who is a perfusionist, **Mr Alok Kumar Verma** who is a surgical assistant, **Mr Rizwan Husain** who is an ICU assistant and **Mr Rajveer Singh Choudhary** who is a Physician Assistant. Four team members came from Brisbane Australia. This included **Dr Benjamin Anderson** who is a pediatric interventional cardiologist, **Ms Kym Stuart** who is a surgical assistant, **Ms Deborah Pegg** who is an ICU nurse and **Ms Sheeja Godwin Deewan** who is also an ICU nurse.Two team members came from California United States. This included **Dr. Shaun Setty** who is an adult and pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon and **Mr Sandy Tolentino** who is a scrub nurse. One doctor came from Oman, **Dr Ranganathan** an anesthetist and intensivist.

A total of 75 children were screened by the Pediatric Cardiologist Dr. Benjamin Anderson together with our local Dr Maryanne Kora'ai. The children were screened from the 23rd to the 26th of April at the newly opened Children's Heart Screening Centre at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre. **A total of 17 cardiac surgeries** were performed by Dr Ashish Katewa and Dr Shaun Setty from the 29th of April till the 4th of May. T**he youngest was a 3-month old baby and the oldest was a 15 year old child**. A child from the Solomon Islands was also a recipient of the free heart surgeries.

The Sai Prema Foundation faciliated and coordinated the entire project with support from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services for medications and consumables. In addition all the surgeries were conducted at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital together with the assistant of the local doctors, nurses and support personnel.

The Minister for Health Honorable Dr. Ifereimi Waqainabete and his team provided full support and at the conclusion of the surgeries and hosted a gratitude lunch for the team.

Newspaper articles

QUALITY HEALTHCARE

Free Screening Offered for Children With Congenital Heart Disease

NEELAM PRASAD
SUVA

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama yesterday officiated at the inauguration of the children's heart screening centre within the Sai Prema Foundation Fiji.

The centre will offer free screening of cardiac related issues in children. The foundation is the brainchild of the Tappoo family in Fiji.

Mr Bainimarama said the Sai Prema had been an invaluable partner of the Fijian Government in realising the constitutional right of every Fijian to healthcare.

Chairman and Founding Trustee, Sai Prema Foundation Fiji Mahendra Tappoo said their primary focus, had been healthcare for the poor and needy, with a particular focus on children suffering from congenital heart disease.

"Why healthcare, and why congenital heart disease you might ask," Mr Tappoo said.

"It's because of the special expertise, constant guidance, invaluable advice, motivation, support and encouragement that we have and continue to receive from our sister organisations in India led by Sri Madhusudan, Sreenivas, Isaac Tigret, and Narsimha Murthy, who are all present here today.

"They are our mentors and they are guided and live by the principles of our founder Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

"We have been carrying out heart screenings of children in the rural villages. We have been bringing in a team of surgeons and support medical professionals led by Dr Ashish Katewa from our sister hospital in India – the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals India – to operate on our children free of charge for the past three years."

"We opened a Medical Centre last year. And now we have set up a children's heart screening centre within our Medical Centre, which will be officially inaugurated by the Prime Minister today (yesterday).

"We have the full support of the Prime Minister and his Government which has granted us land for that very purpose.

"We are working on a memorandum of agreement with the Government through the Minister for Health.

"This is work in progress. Whatever project we have done as a foundation has been in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and the Government.

"As an NGO, we see our role as supporting the Government in its efforts towards providing quality healthcare to the people of Fiji totally free of charge," he said.

Edited by Percy Kean

Feedback: neelam.prasad@fijisun.com.fj



Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama with the Minister for Health and Medical Services Dr Ifereimi Waqainabete at the inauguration of the children's heart screening centre within the Sai Prema Foundation Fiji on April 24, 2019. *Photo:* DEPTFO News

Centre offers free heart screenings for children

By NEEHAL KHATRI

CHILDREN can now undergo free heart screenings at the newly opened Children's Heart Screening Centre based at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre in Suva.

Centre director Dr Krupali Tappoo, during the opening of the facility yesterday, said children would be screened for heart disease using an advanced $200,000 echocardiography machine that had specific pediatric probes.

Dr Tappoo highlighted that about 200 children were born with congenital heart disease every year in Fiji and corrective surgery was the most effective therapy. She added that the Sai Prema Foundation Fiji had helped 54 children undergo free congenital heart disease surgery conducted by an international team of medical professionals from the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital in Raipur, India — saving the children's families about $5.4 million collectively.

The foundation also presented a mobile heart screening device – a HD stethoscope – to the Ministry of Health to assist in heart screenings for children in rural communities around the country.

On future plans, the foundation's chairman Mahendra Tappoo said they were partnering with the Government to establish a specialist children's heart hospital, the first of its kind in the South Pacific.

14 THE FIJI TIMES —THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2019





The medical team who will be conducting open heart surgery for 20 children at the CWM Hospital in Suva.
Picture: JOVESA NAISUA

200 born with heart disease annually

By VILIMAINA NAQELEVUKI

OF the 20,000 children born every year in Fiji, about 200 are born with congenital heart disease.

This, according to Dr Krupali Rathod Tappoo, the director of the Sai Prema Foundation Fiji.

She said the whole process of screenings began with the electrocardiography, which was the screening of the heart.

Dr Ashish Katewa, a visiting Indian pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon, recommended that mothers receive measles vaccination before their child is born.

"A young mother who wants to get pregnant should have their vaccination for measles as this would 100 per cent prevent some of the congenital defects," he said.

He said another factor to consider was nutrition.

"Nutrition is very important.

"Paying attention to nutrition, especially for women wanting to conceive a child, starts from puberty.

"It's not that you think you're healthy that the baby you will conceive will be healthy as well."

He said another way of preventing a baby from developing a congenital heart defect was through ante-natal diagnosis.

"Some defects are very hard to fix and they would need multiple operations, and despite this the longevity is not guaranteed and they have a very poor quality of life."



From left: Staff nurse Kym Stewart, Dr Asish Katewa, Minister for Health and Medical Services Dr Ifereimi Waqainabete, and Sai Prema Foundation chairman Mahendra Tappoo.

SAI PREMA FOUNDATION

17 Children Receive Free Heart Surgeries

AVINESH GOPAL
SUVA

A three-month-old baby was among the 17 children who had a heart surgery operation in Suva in the past week.

The free surgeries were performed by chief surgeon, Dr Asish Katewa and his team from Sanjeevani Hospital in India.

The team was on its third visit to the country, brought by the Sai Prema Foundation for its 'Gift of Life' programme.

Dr Katewa said since their first trip in October 2016, they had performed free heart surgeries on 71 children.

He said a problem seen was the late diagnosis in children, saying that he understood it was hard for parents to get their children to Suva for scanning.

"We also had two young heart surgeons participating with us in the surgeries. Training paediatric heart surgeons is not easy," he said.

"It's three years of training in India for these surgeons. We will provide free training to some doctors from here, food and accommodation will be free too."

> *It's three years of training in India for these surgeons. We will provide free training to some doctors from here, food and accommodation will be free too.*
>
> **Dr Asish Katewa**
> *Chief surgeon*

Dr Katewa said one of the 17 children operated on was from the Solomon Islands.

He also said Suva would soon become the hub of paediatric heart care in the South Pacific.

Sai Prema Foundation chairman Mahendra Tappoo said the foundation was formed with the sole purpose of serving the poor and needy.

"The 'Gift of Life' is the most premier project and it gives us a lot of satisfaction to see needy children having heart surgeries," he said.

The Minister for Health and Medical Services, Dr Ifereimi Waqainabete, said it was a welcome journey and he thanked the Government and all those involved in making the programme successful.

Edited by Susana Tuilau

Feedback: avinesh.gopal@fijisun.com.fj



Ashereen Nisha (standing) showing support to her sister Sumeshni Ali (mother) and Ameer Ali. *Photo:* Kelera Sovasiga



SAI PREMA FOUNDATION

Free Heart Surgery Saves Boy's Life

KELERA SOVASIGA
SUVA

Four and a half year old Ameer Ali is expected to be feeling much better today after his successful free heart operation.

Thanks to the Sai Prema Foundation in conjunction with Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals India and the Ministry of Health. His surgery was conducted at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital in Suva.

The young boy's mother, Sumeshni Ali, said she was grateful to the incredible help done by surgeons and specialists to save her son's life.

"I am so thankful to God and to the surgeons for doing these free heart surgeries in Fiji for kids like my son," said Mrs Ali.

"My son kept having shortness of breath and we kept thinking he had asthma but after medical check-ups and clinics at CWM, we found out that he had a hole in his heart."

Ameer is among the 18-20 children who have and will be undergoing surgery in the next couple of days. Mrs Ali advises parents to always pay attention to their child's health from a very young age and not to take it for granted.

"Always seek medical help from hospitals and nearby medical facilities because you have all the right to know about your kid's health and it is the parent's responsibility to be attentive and not to be careless," said Mrs Ali.

After undergoing a three-hour surgery, Ameer is now recovering at the Intensive Care Unit.

The young recipients were identified with various heart complications after 76 children went through heart screenings last week in the Children's Heart Screening Centre at the Sri Sathya Sanjeevani Medical Centre in Nasese.

Surgeons and medical professionals from Fiji, India, USA, Australia and Oman led by surgeons Dr Ashish Katewa from the Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital India and Dr. Shaun Shetty from the United States of America. The Sai Prema Foundation has assisted 54 children through the free heart surgeries project for the poor and needy children of Fiji since 2016.

Edited by Naisa Koroi

Feedback: kelera.sovasiga@fijisun.com.fj

GIFT OF LIFE

FREE HEART SURGERIES

HEARTFELT GRATITUDE

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji
wishes to offer its heartfelt gratitude to:

- **surgeons, doctors and medical personnel from India, Australia, USA & Oman representing the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital Raipur**
- **Fiji Ministry of Health & Medical Services**
- **CWM Hospital and its personnel**
- **Individuals and organisations**

for graciously supporting our foundation's Gift of Life Free Heart Surgeries project for the children of Fiji.

17

LIVES WERE SAVED

Supported By

Vodafone ATH Fiji Foundation

TTF www.touristtransportfiji.com

TANDOOR

Island Accomodation SUVA Premier Hospitality

FIJI Sun

CORONA-WIDE WORLD

A Project By

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji

SRI SATHYA SAI SANJEEVANI HOSPITAL

MINISTRY of HEALTH & MEDICAL SERVICES
Shaping Fiji's Health

Sai Prema Foundation Fiji

Love All ~ Serve All

www.saipremafiji.com

saipremafiji@gmail.com

Facebook.com/SaiPremaFoundationFiji