



Medical
Aid
East Timor

Dr. Dan Murphy and the Bairo Pite Clinic

June 2001

Pierre Iowa native Doctor Dan Murphy has volunteered in the Southeast Asian country of East Timor since September 1998. Since that time, he has seen over 175,000 patients in the Bairo Pite clinic in Dili, East Timor, and the clinic has become an important part of the health delivery system in the new nation. Health care services were extremely limited during the 24 year-long Indonesian military occupation of East Timor, which ended after the people voted overwhelmingly for independence in August 1999. Dr. Murphy started working in East Timor during the Indonesian occupation, and was deported and blacklisted by the Indonesian government in early 1999. Murphy returned to East Timor in September 1999 to treat patients in a partially destroyed building even as the Indonesian military carried out their post-ballot destruction of the country.

Primary health care is a top priority for the clinic, which sees upwards of 600 patients seen a day. Services provided by the Bairo Pite Clinic include:

- 1.) **Tuberculosis (TB) treatment and control.** There are now more than 1,000 patients registered in the TB program, which includes treatment, education, and follow-up care. Beds at the clinic are reserved for those TB cases too sick for outpatient treatment or for those coming from distant areas. Twenty additional beds for longer-term TB treatment are located at Sister Lourdes' Kolohun site, which is visited by Bairo Pite staff twice a week.
- 2.) **Maternity and infant care.** Four beds are devoted to maternity services at the clinic, which averages 60 deliveries per month. Dr. Murphy hopes to enlarge this area of the clinic and improve water quality to reduce the chance of infection for mother and newborn. Due to its maternal care commitment, Bairo Pite clinic has been chosen to participate in a national midwife training program beginning in May 2001.
- 3.) **Malaria, gastroenteritis, and pneumonia.** Ten in-patient beds are used primarily for less common but dangerous diseases, such as malaria, gastroenteritis, and pneumonia.
- 4.) **Dental services.** Dental care is now limited to extractions but will soon expand to restorative work and training as part of an Australian overseas aid project.
- 5.) **Vaccinations.** Vaccinations for DPT, polio, measles at a minimum (UNICEF standard) are given at the clinic two days a week.
- 6.) **Health outreach.** The clinic participates in many mobile clinics in the remote and often-neglected mountainous areas, and receives patients from all over the country. Dr. Murphy is working to develop a program of health promotion and prevention with links to mountain villages, with the Bairo Pite Clinic serving as the training site for village health workers. However, more funding is needed to make this program a reality.
- 7.) **Training for East Timorese health care workers.** Dr. Murphy has been working with 10 Timorese medical students who began their studies in Indonesia. They are unable to return to their former schools to finish their education. Five students have been able to resume studying overseas, and Dr. Murphy is assisting the others in their attempts to attend Western medical schools. Nursing students from LaHane, East Timor also rotate through Bairo Pite clinic as part of their training in practical skills.

In addition, the Bairo Pite Clinic has one of the best laboratories in Dili, offering basic hematology, urine, stool, and some chemistries; a general clinical and a TB ward; an adequate pharmacy, with most needed medications available; a kitchen; laundry facilities; water supply system; and a power generator. A computer center is being planned that will provide medical information and training to health care workers and others interested in medical topics. The center will be used to keep staff updated on advancements in medical knowledge through Internet links to medical libraries in Australia and the US. Clinic staff also assists with local radio and TV programming on health issues as part of their public education efforts.

The Bairo Pite staff currently numbers thirty people and services are available to all, regardless of ability to pay, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The monthly clinic budget is approximately \$6,000 US and rising. Funding from the District Health Services in East Timor, which has substantially funded the clinic in the past, has recently been halted, leaving the clinic in a perilous position. Any assistance is greatly needed and appreciated.

TO DONATE TO THE BAIRO PITE CLINIC :

Checks may be made to "Medical Aid East Timor" and sent to East Timor Action Network, 1202 Williamson Street, Madison, WI 53703. Thank you for your support!

For further information, visit our website: www.aideasttimor.org

TALK: *The Challenge of Medicine in East Timor*

Dr. Dan Murphy of Bairo Pite clinic, UW Hospital Clinical Science Center
Room G5/113 noon TUES June 12th (Wing G5 room 113, 600 Highland Ave)

TALK AND SLIDE SHOW! :

Healing EAST TIMOR with medicine and laughter

Dr. Dan Murphy of Bairo Pite clinic

and Yohan of Bibi Bulak NGO

Tues, June 12, 7:30 pm - Pres House, 731 State Street, off
Library Mall

DINNER FUNDRAISER FOR THE CLINIC!

Weds, June 13, 5:30 pm - Chautara restaurant, 334 State
Street. Dinner at 5:30pm, \$8.50 suggested; donations for the
Bairo Pite clinic graciously accepted.

Dr. Murphy talks 6:15-7:00pm :

A doctor's eye view of East Timor's medical health development

Dr. Dan Murphy has volunteered most of the past three years at the Bairo Pite medical clinic in East Timor's capital, Dili. Bairo Pite is one of the largest health care providers in East Timor, with programs focused on malaria, tuberculosis, and maternal and child care. Over the past three years, Dr. Dan has traveled with the East Timorese from Indonesian occupation to near-independence, building real relationships with the people he treats.

Yohan is a former Madison resident who has lived in East Timor for nearly a year. He helped found Bibi Bulak, a nongovernmental organization providing entertainment, healing, and popular education through theater and music.

Both Dr. Dan and Yohan have worked extensively with the community in Madison's sister city of Ainaro, East Timor.