

Rotary, and Malaria Awareness

One child dies from malaria, somewhere in the world, every two minutes.

Recent global statistics show that the annual death toll from malaria is 429,000 people, of which 70% are children under the age of 5 years.

Sadly, malaria is a major cause of poverty throughout the developing world. The debilitating effects on sufferers prevent them from working to earn a living or from training or attending school. Currently there are well over 200 million new cases of malaria reported each year.

However, there is some good news. Malaria control measures have reduced annual death rates by 60% since 2000, and reduced the number of cases by 37% worldwide. This has meant that an estimated 6 million child deaths have been averted, while steady progress is being made towards the goal of eliminating malaria by 2040.

More good news is that the World Health Organisation (WHO) recently declared Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan malaria free, and expects Algeria, Argentina and Paraguay to seek elimination certification during 2017.

In the SW Pacific area, the Rotary project '**Rotarians Against Malaria**' (**RAM**) has been supporting malaria control programs in Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste since 1995 by providing low level insecticide (LLIN) treated bed nets, and practical support on the ground. Since 2009 in PNG, RAM has collaborated with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, the latter by the two allocations.

This work by Rotary has resulted in a 70% reduction in malaria cases in PNG; an 87% reduction in the Solomon Islands and a 99% reduction in Timor Leste. RAM also supports programs by researching ways to decrease the incidence to zero, and eliminate malaria, island by island from our region.

One recent initiative is funding the next stage of human trials of a promising malaria vaccine being developed by scientists at Griffith University. If the vaccine lives up to expectations, the next phase will be much larger scale human testing in an endemic country such as PNG.

Individuals can make a tax-deductible donation at the RAM web site at www.ramaustralia.org and/or the Griffith University project website at <https://malariavaccineproject.com>

Rotary Clubs in D9710 are asked to consider donating \$500 in their end of year distributions to either RAM or the Griffith University project.

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