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Volunteers restore hope in Cebu

Deborah Jackson

A team of nurses and anaesthetists from Prince of Wales Private Hospital in Randwick have arrived home from a lifesaving mission to the Philippines.

Visiting the town of Cebu, the team performed life-changing surgery on 76 disfigured children as part of the hospital's contribution to the non-profit organisation, Operation Restore Hope.

Maureen Eddisson, a clinical nurse specialist at the hospital, has been the co-ordinator of Operation Restore Hope since 1998.

"The difference these few days make to the lives of children and communities cannot be underestimated," she said.

Each year, about 50,000 children are born in the Philippines with a cleft lip or cleft palate, disfiguring conditions that leave them ostracised, bullied, malnourished or abandoned by their families.

Operation Restore Hope, now in its 16th year, has helped some 2000 patients in Manila and Cebu.

"We do the younger kids first because they have the best outcomes. We aim to do everybody but sometimes there just isn't the time," she said.

"Our aim is to cure as many as possible and just to keep the organisation going so that it is self sufficient with enough reliable funds to keep going."

For more details or to donate, visit operationrestorehope.org.



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Nurses and anaesthetists from Prince of Wales Private Hospital in Cebu, where they recently performed 76 life-changing surgeries.