



InterplastTM

Repairing bodies & rebuilding lives
in the Asia Pacific region

INTERPLAST MEDICAL VOLUNTEER MANUAL



OUR VISION

‘People in developing countries across the Asia Pacific region have timely access to high quality surgical, medical and allied health services’.

OUR MISSION

To enhance people’s health and wellbeing by enabling access to life-changing reconstructive surgery and related medical services

OUR VALUES

- **We respect the values, cultures and perspectives of the countries and people with whom we work.**
- **In all our endeavours, Interplast remains independent of any political or religious affiliations.**
- **We value and harness the support, input and contributions of our volunteers, donors, partners and staff.**

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Interplast delivers and enables surgical and related medical services of the highest standards where patient welfare is always of paramount concern.**
- **Interplast is collaborative in its approach, building partnerships and fostering strategic alliances.**
- **Interplast’s development philosophy is underpinned by the fundamental principle that solutions, changes and impact should be sustainable and enduring.**
- **Measuring and understanding the impact of the Interplast initiatives is critical to all aspects of the Interplast strategy. Accordingly, transparency, evaluation and accountability is embraced in all Interplast’s undertakings.**
- **Interplast responds to needs or opportunities as they arise and as its resources allow. In doing so, Interplast directs its resources and expertise in areas where it can achieve the greatest impact, ideally to those experiencing the greatest disadvantage.**

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WELCOME!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Interplast Australia & New Zealand. We are a small, but dynamic Non-Government Organisation, committed to changing futures across the Asia Pacific through plastic and reconstructive surgical and training programs.

This Manual is designed for Interplast's current and prospective volunteer medical professionals, to ensure that you have a comprehensive understanding of what it means to volunteer with us, your role, responsibilities, and what you can expect from our programs, in an easy-to-use guide.

It covers everything from our recruitment and selection processes, to the paperwork involved in volunteering for our programs, policies and procedures that govern how we work, requirements around reporting, monitoring and evaluation and importantly, the incredible benefits of volunteering your time and skills to help repair bodies and rebuild lives across the Asia Pacific region.

We thank you for your passion and commitment in helping us to deliver our mission.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Prue Ingram".

Prue Ingram
CEO, Interplast Australia & New Zealand



1. ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.1 OVERVIEW & HISTORY

Interplast is about changing futures through repairing bodies and rebuilding lives. We have been around since 1983, and currently work across 17 countries in the Asia Pacific region, sending teams of highly skilled, fully qualified volunteer plastic and reconstructive surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and allied health professionals to deliver surgical and training programs. We work collaboratively with local partners, meeting locally-identified needs to treat patients and build plastic and reconstructive surgical services in local settings, along with the anaesthetic, nursing and allied health supports required for quality surgical outcomes.

Over 40 years ago, Dr Donald R Laub of Stanford University, pioneered the idea that reconstructive plastic surgery could rehabilitate, reintegrate and transform lives. In 1969, his vision led to the creation of Interplast (USA), now Resurge International. Thousands of medical volunteers extended a helping hand by travelling overseas and assisting those in need. Mr Leo Rozner, an Australian plastic surgeon, was one of those volunteers.

To find out how this one idea led to where we are today, read about how it all began on our website:

<https://www.interplast.org.au/learn-more/our-organisation/history/>

2017, marks 34 years of activity, encompassing over 41,000 patient consultations and 24,000 surgeries during over 750 programs across 25 countries in the Asia Pacific region. Looking to the future, our hope is to help our partner countries build health systems that meet their communities' needs so well, there is no longer any need for Interplast. Until that time, we will continue to seek support from donors, fundraisers and volunteers to change futures through surgery and training across the Asia Pacific region.

Interplast holds full accreditation with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), is a member of the Australian Council of International Development (ACFID), and signatory to its Code of Conduct.



ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.2 WHERE WE WORK

While Interplast has worked across 25 countries since its inception in 1983, our current programs focus on 17 countries in the Asia Pacific region.



The focus, history and complexity of Interplast's programs in each of these countries varies considerably both between and within each country. You can read more about what we are doing in each location on our website, here: <https://www.interplast.org.au/learn-more/where-we-work/>

ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.3 HOW WE WORK

Interplast recognises that each of our partner countries is very different in terms of the local health infrastructure, types of conditions needing treatment and capacity of local medical personnel. As such, Interplast's programs vary considerably from country to country, in terms of program focus, type and regularity.

Working in close collaboration with our local partners in each country, our annual country programs are developed to address locally identified needs and reflecting local conditions and requirements.

Working only where we are invited to do so, Interplast's development philosophy is underpinned by principles of local partnership, flexibility to adapt to changing requirements and a respect for the leadership, integrity and locally-relevant expertise of our partners.



In some countries, such as Sri Lanka and Myanmar, where there are numerous highly skilled plastic and reconstructive surgeons, Interplast's programs focus on high level, advanced reconstructive surgical training and mentoring. In other countries, such as the smaller Pacific Islands, where there are no permanent plastic surgeons locally available, Interplast's focus is more on provision of surgical service and basic surgical skills training. You can read more about each of our individual country programs on the Interplast website.



ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.4 INTERPLAST'S DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

In line with our focus on developing long term, sustainable health systems, Interplast has drawn on over 33 years of experience working across the Asia Pacific region, to develop a deep understanding of the complexities of the local health sectors.

A single-track approach of sending in short-term medical teams is not optimal to achieve Interplast's mission. A focus on sending medical teams to developing countries to provide a direct service, with no or limited capacity building components, typically delivers a short-term clinical output. Interplast acknowledges that in some contexts direct medical intervention is necessary (for example due to a lack of local personnel available to provide this service). However, in line with Interplast's development philosophy, it is recognised that in these circumstances it is most useful as an entry point for a staged process of long-term integrated capacity building activities.

Interplast has therefore adopted an integrated, twin-track track approach to achieving long-term outcomes. With an understanding of sustainable development, Interplast's activities do not solely focus on a medical-orientated service delivery model, but are complemented with integrated capacity building activities.

The two key integrated components are:

- 1) Sending fully qualified teams of volunteer plastic and reconstructive surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and allied health professionals to facilitate local medical support and service, which would otherwise be inaccessible to many people. Capacity building activities are integrated into each surgical activity (both formal and non-formal) with capacity developed using a 'teaching by doing' approach; and
- 2) Providing direct training/mentoring support (human and financial resources) to further develop local medical professionals. This is facilitated through exchange of knowledge and/or professional development opportunities locally and internationally, by assisting universities and professional societies in the recipient countries to develop formal and informal curricula and teaching programs and by the use of scholarship and visitation programs.

Ultimately, Interplast's development philosophy aims to contribute to the strengthening and fostering of sustainable health systems and local provision of long-term access for local communities to quality health services. This is a process that requires on-going collaboration with local partners, input from Interplast's volunteers and support from both the private and public sectors. Interplast's long-term experience in the region, together with the significant technical expertise in plastic and reconstructive surgery and associated medical and allied health services, has enabled Interplast to strengthen its clinical and developmental outcomes for individuals, in-country partners and local health systems.

You can read Interplast's full Development Philosophy on our website: <https://www.interplast.org.au/development-philosophy/>



ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.5 TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Interplast knows that for most of the conditions seen by our teams, surgery is vital. Types of conditions treated include cleft lip and palate, burns (acute and burns scar contractures), hand injuries requiring tendon and nerve repairs, lower limb reconstruction following trauma, removal of tumours and various congenital conditions other than cleft lip and palate. Surgery is, however, often only one aspect of treating these conditions.

For this reason Interplast also delivers a number of programs focused around anaesthetics, nursing and allied health, where the need has been identified. For example, hand therapists on programs that see a large number of hand injuries, speech therapists on programs that see numerous cleft lip and palate cases. The need for podiatrists and physiotherapists and breast care nurses has also been included on programs with a locally identified need for support in this area.

Interplast programs can be categorised into 4 categories: surgical, training & mentoring, planning and evaluation and institutional support. Each of these categories is described below, along with some examples of these in practice.

Program type	% of programs in 2015/16	Description & key features	Examples in practice
Surgical	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 weeks in duration, with a team of up to 7 people (a mix of surgeons, nurses, anaesthetists and allied health). Working in partnership with local hospital to deliver a program focused on treating patients - up to 80 surgical procedures for a two-week program. Training built into the program through mentoring within a clinical context (in-theatre), or formal lectures delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual surgical programs to the Pacific Islands including Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands Annual surgical programs to the Philippines (Masbate, Baguio City, Cagayan de Oro)
Training & Mentoring	68%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter duration - usually no more than one week. Smaller team - usually a maximum of 2-3 people, depending on training focus May include some clinical work for teaching purposes (for example in surgical mentoring programs), or classroom based-teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced reconstructive surgical training in Sri Lanka (paediatric hand surgery, craniofacial surgery) Allied Health training workshops in Fiji (through the Fiji UpU) Ward nurse education in the Solomon Islands & Kiribati Hand therapy training in Bangladesh (within the hospital) Scholarships to bring anaesthetists from Indonesia to Australia to undertake clinical training or observational placements
Institutional Support	6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of direct financial support to local partners in our partner countries to deliver training programs directly Local partners have capacity to be delivering training themselves, but may be lacking financial resources to run workshops or support participants to attend from rural areas. Local partners must comply with Interplast funding agreements, reporting requirements and be actively working towards financial sustainability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the Mongolian Society of Anaesthetists to deliver their annual scientific conference / training workshops (direct funding provided as well as supporting Australian faculty to attend & present) Supporting local partners in Bangladesh to deliver Emergency Management of Severe Burns training using local faculty
Planning & Evaluation	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities related to planning, monitoring and evaluation of Interplast programs. May include Interplast staff and/or volunteers undertaking needs assessments for new programs, or monitoring visits to meet with local partners and discuss ongoing programs. Generally, 3-4 of these per year, depending on specific needs and funding. Establishing agreements with local governments and institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country program evaluation of PNG - Included staff & Interplast surgeons visiting a number of locations within PNG, meeting local partners, interviewing local surgeons and patients. Needs assessment to Masbate, Philippines (new program) - Included Interplast staff and volunteer Country Coordinator visiting the hospital to assess its capacity to host a visiting Interplast team and meet with local administrators & government to discuss permissions and logistics. Evaluation of Interplast anaesthetic training program in Mongolia - Included staff and volunteer Country Coordinator visiting various program locations, meeting with local partners to discuss programs, outcomes and future plans.

ABOUT INTERPLAST

1.6 GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

As an established, professional non-government organisation and development agency, Interplast has a range of governance mechanisms in place which govern how we work, and support our compliance requirements.

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

Interplast is a company limited by guarantee, with a voluntary Board of Directors. Further information on this can be found on our website.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, Interplast has a number of Committees and Working Groups which provide clinical, training and evaluation and risk oversight. These Committees and Working Groups meet on a regular basis and are comprised of volunteer medical professionals as well as a range of other professions (including finance, legal, communications, monitoring & evaluation). These are:

- Interplast Surgical Committee
- Interplast Audit and Risk Committee
- Interplast Rotarian Committee
- Interplast Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group
- Interplast Nurse Working Group
- Interplast Allied Health Working Group

EXTERNAL REGULATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

In Australia - Interplast holds full Non-Government Organisation (NGO) accreditation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) – a comprehensive and strict process where Australian NGOs are assessed on a 5-yearly basis to ensure that they meet the compliance requirements of the Australian Government. As a part of this accreditation, Interplast is also a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), requiring annual compliance with its Code of Conduct.

Both DFAT accreditation and ACFID membership require Interplast to have a number of policies and frameworks in place which guide everything that we do, from our governance processes, to our fundraising and communications, to the planning, delivery and evaluation of our overseas programs. Both our staff and our volunteers (including medical volunteers) are bound by these policies and procedures

As well as the ACFID membership and DFAT accreditation, Interplast is also required to comply with the regulations of a number of other regulatory and fundraising authorities and standards.

Overseas – Interplast must comply with the local regulations and compliance requirements relating to our programs in each of our partner countries. These include requirements relating to local medical and nursing registrations, importation of medical equipment and supplies (customs) immigration (visas) and various other local permissions from different levels of government. These requirements vary between and within countries, and often change on a regular basis. All Interplast volunteers must comply with these local requirements, overseen and coordinated by Interplast staff.

2. VOLUNTEERING WITH INTERPLAST

2.1 WHAT DO INTERPLAST VOLUNTEERS DO?

Our volunteers are our lifeblood. They make it possible for people in the Asia Pacific region to receive life changing surgery which they would otherwise be unable to afford or have access to. One operation performed by an Interplast surgical team to treat disability has a significant ripple effect - their work positively impacts not only the patient, but also on the patient's family, their community. The impact of training local health professionals has an even more far-reaching impact, ensuring that current and future generations of these communities will have improved local access plastic and reconstructive surgical and related health treatment.

Our volunteers work with local partners to:

- Provide surgery and associated medical support
- Deliver education, training and mentoring to local medical personnel
- Build long-term relationships between Australia & New Zealand, and our partner countries.

Our volunteers report high levels of satisfaction in relation to their experiences with Interplast. Many have noted their times on Interplast activities as among the most rewarding of their careers. Interplast's focus on capacity building aligns with the values held by many of our volunteers who believe in the old saying that a hand up is better than a hand out. Our volunteers recognise that volunteering for Interplast is a privilege – enabling them to visit incredible locations and to get to know and work with dedicated local medical professionals and patients – expanding their horizons and allowing them to contribute something to their profession which isn't readily possible back home.



Despite the sometimes scenic and picturesque settings of some of our program activities, they are rarely leisurely and relaxing. To make best use of our limited time in country and the availability of our volunteers, activities are often very busy to enable the most effective outcomes possible.

This increased workload does not however mean they forsake the standard of professional care provided when practising at home.

Interplast and its volunteers are held and remain accountable to the same high professional standards expected of them when they practise in Australia and New Zealand. Interplast works to a high professional standard and all of its programs work within strict compliance requirements.

VOLUNTEERING WITH INTERPLAST

2.2 TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

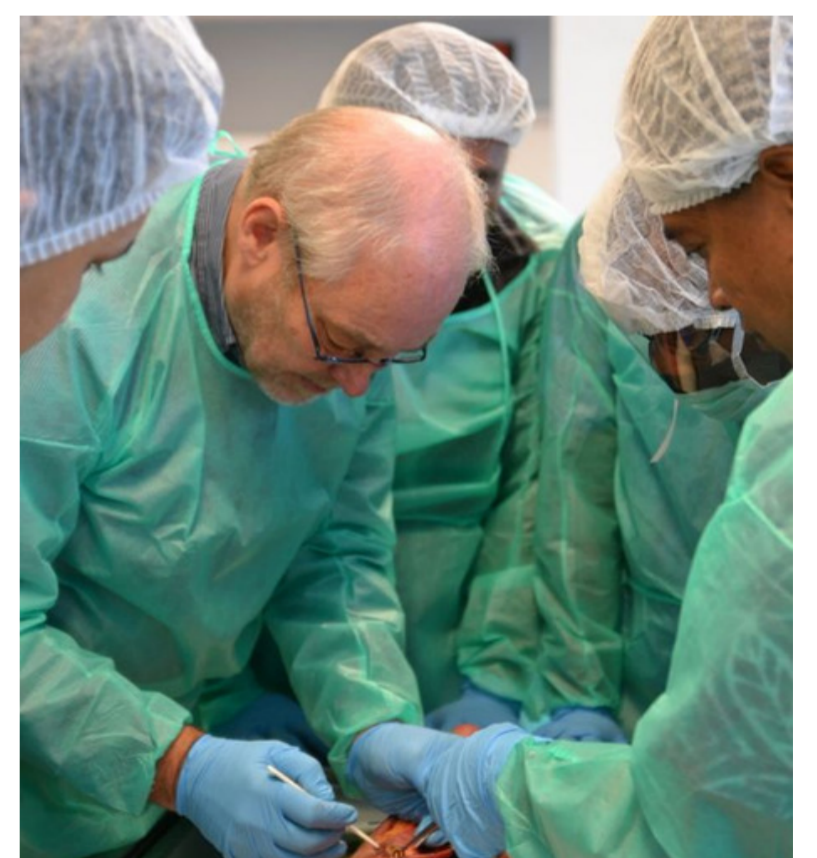
Interplast medical volunteers currently include:

- Plastic and reconstructive surgeons (and a smaller number of orthopaedic surgeons)
- Anaesthetists (both adult and paediatric)
- Nurses (operating theatre, recovery, ward nurses, nurse educators)
- Allied health professionals (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech pathologists, podiatrists)

All Interplast medical volunteers are fully qualified in their profession, and fully registered to practice in Australia or New Zealand. On occasion, Interplast may accept medical volunteers from countries other than Australia or New Zealand (if a specific program requires it and/or if a specific area of expertise can't be sourced locally), however their qualification must be recognised in Australia or New Zealand, and must be accepted by the local partner country.

While our volunteers are a diverse group of people, there are a key characteristics which they all share:

- A passion for helping others
- Fully qualified and experienced in their area of expertise
- An understanding that building local capacity is as important as treating patients
- Understanding that through volunteering, they are not only representing Interplast, but Australia and New Zealand more broadly.
- Recognising that volunteering is a two-way street, with our volunteers learning as much from local partners as they teach.
- Recognising the need for strict compliance around our programs, to ensure we are able to uphold our reputation and our quality of programs
- Flexibility, reliability, cultural appreciation and respect, valuing teamwork and recognising that our local partners are experts in their location, and volunteers are guests of that country.
- Ability to adapt their working style to suit local cultural considerations.
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Understand the importance of providing comprehensive reporting (both clinical and other) back to Interplast on completion of each program.



VOLUNTEERING WITH INTERPLAST

2.3 RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

Interplast has a large pool of volunteers, many who have been with Interplast for decades, as well as those who have only recently joined us, and everything in-between. Some volunteers go on programs on an annual basis, some more often, some only every few years. Some volunteers stop volunteering for a period as their personal or professional circumstances require, and then recommence when they are able. Programs are generally no more than two weeks in duration, though the majority of programs are one week or less.

Interplast recognises that our volunteers contribute significantly in terms of their time, lost income, and being away from home and families, and we work hard to ensure that we are able to accommodate these factors.



If you are interested in volunteering with Interplast for the first time, please do so through our website - <https://www.interplast.org.au/learn-more/our-organisation/volunteers/> - where you can find out about the specific requirements for each type of volunteer, and register your interest, if you are eligible.

If you have any specific questions, feel free to call us for a chat on +613 9249 1231, and ask to speak .

After you complete your online application, this will be reviewed by the Interplast team, including, where necessary, members of our advisory groups, to ensure that you meet the requirements of volunteering for Interplast. We will confirm receipt of your application and let you know whether or not you have been successful in being added to our pool of volunteers.

Please note that Interplast is in a fortunate position to have more volunteers than it is able to send on programs, and this, alongside the 4-6 month lead time required to mobilise volunteer teams, means that it may be an extended period until Interplast is able to find a suitable volunteer position for you. We appreciate your patience!

In the meantime, you can support Interplast by signing up to newsletters on our website, fundraising on our behalf, and following us through social media.



VOLUNTEERING WITH INTERPLAST

There are many factors that contribute to volunteer selection to a specific program:

- Professional skills and experience
- Teaching ability
- Experience in the particular country or region
- Ensuring an appropriate mix within a team of experienced and new members



While the team leader of a specific program activity plays a role in selection of a team, the final decision sits with Interplast, to ensure that teams meet all requirements both of Interplast and of our local partners. While Interplast does work to support volunteers to return to programs in subsequent years if circumstances allow, and while we recognise the importance of long-term relationships with our local partners, this is subject to the requirements of that program, and to Interplast's broader work to ensure that we are regularly supporting new volunteers to get involved. We appreciate your understanding that just because you have been on a program previously, you will not necessarily return to that same place again. As discussed by the Executive and for noting by the Board, for two week surgical programs, it is the preferred position of the Board that in rare circumstances if volunteer surgeons choose to 'share' a program (i.e split a two week program with each volunteer attending half), then those volunteers involved will be required to cover additional associated costs (e.g. airfares).

Program dates are negotiated between the Interplast office and local partners, based on local partner availability and requirements, and scheduling of other Interplast activities (including availability of equipment and supplies kits). Interplast does its best to ensure dates are suitable to volunteers, however, local partner requirements are the priority.

Once volunteers are selected and confirmed for a program activity, the relevant Interplast Program Activities Coordinator will be in regular communication with them to outline all the required documentation and processes for that particular program (related to partner-country medical registration, visa and other requirements, as well as broader Interplast policy requirements) and to keep them abreast of plans as they are being made for the program, and answer any questions.

The Program Activities Coordinator can link up new volunteers (or volunteers new to that particular program) with experienced Interplast volunteers, as a mentor/buddy. The Program Activities Coordinator will be in close contact with all volunteers in the lead-up to program departure, while the team is away, and following their return home

INTERPLAST PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Each Interplast program activity is coordinated by a specific member of the Interplast Programs Team, one of the 'Program Activities Coordinators'. They will manage all aspects of the planning and arrangements for the activity. This includes all liaison with the volunteer team, local partners, bookings for flights, accommodation, transport and other aspects, confirming dates, applying for visas and local medical registrations, and obtaining all the required paperwork from the volunteer team. This coordinator will also undertake all post-program evaluation and follow-up. They will be the key point of contact at Interplast for all your questions and concerns. When you are selected to participate in a program activity, you will be advised who your Program Activities Coordinator is.

3. INTERPLAST POLICIES & PROTOCOLS

Interplast is governed by strict compliance requirements which direct all aspects of our work. Integral to these requirements are a number of policies and protocols which underpin the work of the organisation, and importantly, the work of our volunteer medical professionals. It is a requirement of volunteering for Interplast that our volunteers understand these policies and protocols and are prepared to adhere to them at all times.

Policies and protocols cover everything from guidelines on clinical practice while on an Interplast program, to use of social media, considerations of child protection, gender, disability and environmental protection, photography and case studies, to management of clinical and other incidents.

Below is an outline of the Interplast policies and protocols and other documentation which relate to our volunteers, and information on when volunteers are required to provide, read or sign these.

INTERPLAST POLICIES

Document name	Where can this be accessed?	When does it need to be accessed?	
Interplast Child Protection Policy	Interplast website (full policy) and through the volunteer registration process (online system for volunteers once they have been assigned to a program activity).	When volunteers first register their interest with Interplast. It then needs to be reviewed and signed off on an annual basis, or if volunteering less than once per year, prior to each program a volunteer participates in.	
Interplast Social Media Policy		This policy needs to be reviewed and signed off on an annual basis, or if volunteering less than once per year, prior to each program a volunteer participates in.	
Interplast Case Study and Photography Policy (& Guidelines)			
Interplast Gender Equality Policy	Interplast website (full policy)	It is expected that volunteers familiarise themselves with this policy prior to first participating in an Interplast program activity.	
Interplast Privacy Policy			
Interplast Disability Inclusion Policy			
Interplast HIV & AIDS Policy			
Interplast Environment Policy			
Interplast Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy			
Interplast Counter-terrorism Policy			
Interplast Media Relations Policy			
Interplast Complaints Policy			This can be accessed when required at any time.

OTHER INTERPLAST DOCUMENTS

Document name	Where can this be accessed?	When does it need to be accessed?
Interplast Development Philosophy	Interplast website (full policy) and through the volunteer registration process (online system for volunteers once they have been assigned to a program activity).	When volunteers first register their interest with Interplast. It then needs to be reviewed and signed off on an annual basis, or if volunteering less than once per year, prior to each program a volunteer participates in.
Clinical Guidelines on an Interplast Program	Available through the online volunteer system for volunteers once they have been assigned to a program activity. Also available on request from the Interplast office.	These guidelines needs to be reviewed and signed off on an annual basis, or if volunteering less than once per year, prior to each program a volunteer participates in.
Interplast Program Activity Participant Protocol		This policy needs to be reviewed and signed off on an annual basis, or if volunteering less than once per year, prior to each program a volunteer participates in.
Travel Risk Management Framework		It is expected that volunteers familiarise themselves with this policy prior to first participating in an Interplast program activity.
Interplast Incident Management Framework		It is expected that volunteers familiarise themselves with this policy prior to first participating in an Interplast program activity. It is also available to volunteers while on a program activity.

INTERPLAST POLICIES & PROTOCOLS

OTHER MISCELANEOUS DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Document name	Why this is needed	How often is this required?
Certified copy of volunteer's passport & driver's licence (or other identification)	This is required as identification for background (police) checking, as well as by local partners overseas for things like medical and nursing registration, visas etc.	Once Interplast has received copies, these are valid as long as the document is valid for. Interplast will advise when the documents on file are expiring and need to be replaced.
Confirmation of of current medical or nursing registration	For Australian volunteers, this can be accessed directly by Interplast staff from the AHPRA website. However at this stage Interplast still requires NZ volunteers to provide theirs, and in some instances, Interplast will require an actual certificate from Australian volunteers, or a Certificate of Registration Status..	
Certified copies of professional qualifications (both undergraduate and postgraduate)	These are required for confirmation of qualifications and to provide to local partners for medical and nursing registration, and often for visas and other compliance requirements.	As these are a one-off document, they are only required once and will then be kept on file. However, Interplast does require that they be quality, certified copies.
Completed CrimCheck application form (supplied by Interplast)	All volunteers are required to undertake a national criminal history check which is managed by the Interplast office.	Checks are valid for two years, however Interplast may request a new check to be completed more often if required.
Completed Referee Check form (supplied by Interplast)	All volunteers are required to provide 2 professional referees which Interplast contact to undertake reference checks related to child protection.	This is a one-off process, completed prior to a volunteer's first program activity.
Completed per-diem form (supplied by Interplast)	All volunteers requiring a per-diem to cover meals and incidental costs must complete this form prior to each program activity	Prior to each program activity
Confirmation of medical indemnity insurance (surgeons & anaesthetists only) *	Interplast requires that surgeons and anaesthetists ensure their Medical Indemnity Insurance is extended for the duration of Interplast programs to cover them while overseas.	Prior to each program activity
Online volunteer registration	This online process ensures that volunteers have maintained current information and review important policies and protocols on a regular basis.	This must be done at minimum of once per 12 months (for volunteers who participate on programs more than once per year) or prior to each program activity.

Note: Specific documents required by Interplast will depend on the type of volunteer, and the program on which they are going – depending on the local requirements of partner countries and specifics relating to the volunteer's profession. The above list is intended to give an indication only, and specific requirements will be communicated to volunteers by the Interplast Program Activities Coordinator in the lead-up to a specific activity.

*Note that Interplast will provide indemnity insurance for nurse and allied health volunteers, see page 14 for more details.



4. VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Recognising that our medical volunteers are giving their time and professional skills to deliver our surgical and training programs overseas, the Interplast team work hard to ensure that all other aspects of the program are arranged on their behalf – everything from arranging travel and accommodation, local licencing, visas, customs documentation and medical equipment and supplies.

While the Interplast team requires volunteers to provide the specific paperwork for each activity (within the timeframes given) Interplast then works with logistics partners, local hospitals and other organisations to ensure that all arrangements are made. It is the responsibility of individual volunteers to ensure they have a minimum of 6 months' validity on their passport from the date of departure.

4.1 AIRFARES

In most cases, volunteer airfares and required ground transport are booked and paid for directly by Interplast to and from the country (city) of destination. Interplast will only cover the costs of an economy airfare, and if volunteers wish to book business class (or higher), they must pay the additional cost directly to the Interplast travel agent.

This is to ensure best value fares through Interplast's travel agent, and to ensure that if the activity is postponed or cancelled that airfares are able to be changed or cancelled with minimal financial risk and are covered by Interplast's travel insurance. It also ensures that the team is booked as a group so that if changes are required prior to or during the activity, they are made as a team. Group bookings done through Interplast's agent also improve opportunity for excess baggage waiver from the airlines, which is an important factor in ensuring our programs are best value for money.



If volunteers wish to include a holiday onto either end of the Interplast program activity, Interplast can include this in their booking, however if additional costs are incurred, these must be met by the volunteer. Interplast's travel and health insurance does not extend to holidays, and insurance holidays either end of the program activity are the responsibility of the volunteer. Any arrangements for volunteers to book their own airfares must be approved by Interplast prior to booking, and will only be considered under strict circumstances.

Volunteers are responsible and liable for the cost of obtaining and retaining their own passport with at least six months validity.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

4.2 ACCOMMODATION

Volunteer accommodation is organised and generally paid for by Interplast. Interplast pays for hotel room only (sometimes including breakfast), with any incidental costs (e.g. mini bar, telephone calls, laundry, wifi) will be the responsibility of volunteers to pay on checkout. Interplast's per-diem allowance paid to volunteers is designed to accommodate some of these incidental costs. Accommodation is chosen in line with Interplast's procurement policy and in line with security requirements. Accommodation is required to represent good value for money (and within budget) while being appropriately safe and secure and mindful of the needs of the volunteer team.

Any arrangements for volunteers to book their own accommodation must be approved by Interplast prior to booking, and will only be considered under strict circumstances.

4.3 PER DIEMS

Volunteers are provided with a modest per-diem during their time on a program activity. The amount varies across and within countries. The rate is calculated based on local cost of living.

The per-diem is intended to cover meals (that aren't already covered by accommodation rate or by local partners), drinks and transport in-country and incidentals including transport to and from the airport in Australia (or airport parking) and contribution towards things such as phone calls home, laundry and internet (if not provided in room rate).

Volunteers are not required to keep receipts or acquit expenses using the per-diem process, however if they feel that they did not spend all the per-diem required, they are encouraged to reimburse this to Interplast.

4.4 TRAVEL & HEALTH INSURANCE

Interplast provides volunteers with travel and personal accident and health insurance, through its policy with Accident & Health International. This policy covers all Interplast volunteers only for the duration of the program activity. If a volunteer chooses to stay overseas outside the duration of the Interplast activity, they must arrange their own separate policy for this period.

4.5 MEDICAL AND PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

It is the responsibility of volunteer medical practitioners to provide written proof to Interplast of their current medical indemnity insurance which will cover them for the duration of their participation in an Interplast activity. Most Medical Defence Organisations (MDOs) will issue a statement to this effect, if it is not already part of the standard insurance policy. Interplast's own insurance policy covers professional indemnity for nurses and allied health practitioners.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

4.6 VOLUNTEER PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING

All volunteers will be provided with pre-departure briefing via phone and email, including provision of an electronic pre-departure pack document specific to each country, with helpful information and contacts. Volunteers are linked up with other members of their team so that they can be in contact directly prior to departure, particularly if it is their first program. Identified team members will undertake training on the electronic patient record database.



4.7 VISAS, CUSTOMS PERMITS AND LOCAL MEDICAL AND NURSING REGISTRATION

Interplast will work with local in-country partners to arrange all the required permits and paperwork for Interplast volunteer teams, ahead of program activities. In some cases, teams will receive visas on arrival, in other cases, volunteers will need to provide their passport to Interplast to be sent off to obtain visas in advance.



Interplast will advise volunteers of luggage allowances prior to departure. Interplast will make all required arrangements for local medical and nursing registration, permits of import for medical equipment and supplies, and arrangements with airlines for excess baggage waivers where possible.

4.8 REIMBURSEMENTS

Volunteer per-diems will generally cover most expenses, and the rates are continually reviewed to ensure they are reasonable and fair. However, Interplast acknowledges that there may be instances where volunteers will need to pay for additional expenses (for example, excess baggage). In these circumstances Interplast will provide a reimbursement for agreed extras subject to submitting a formal reimbursement form together with receipts.

In general, Interplast does not reimburse travel vaccinations or new passport costs, as these are items which will be used by the volunteer for other non-Interplast activities.



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

4.9 HEALTH

It is the responsibility of volunteers to arrange advice about and obtain the appropriate vaccinations prior to departure. Interplast provides each volunteer with general health facts of their country of destination, however, Interplast staff are not able to provide specific medical advice. Interplast recommends that all volunteers speak to their GP ahead of each program, or seeks advice from a travel doctor. In most cases volunteers will cover their own costs of vaccinations, however, you can discuss this with your Program Activities Coordinator if you need.

4.10 SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety and security of our volunteers is of upmost importance to Interplast. Interplast works closely with our international security provider, Dynamiq, as well as our local partners' in-country to ensure that risk is minimised, and where necessary, additional resources are in place to ensure the security of our teams. This may mean a security provider is available on-the-ground during a program, or may impact on the choice of accommodation and local transport.

All Interplast volunteers are registered on DFAT's Smart Traveller or NZ's Travel Safe prior to departure, and are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the local context prior to departure. Where there are particular security concerns, Interplast teams will be briefed prior to departure.

Program activities may be cancelled at short notice if a local situation becomes compromised in terms of safety and security and risk is deemed too high. While Interplast endeavours to give as much notice as possible to volunteers in this event, often situations are beyond the control of Interplast.

4.11 MEDICAL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

To ensure that our volunteer teams have the equipment and supplies required to deliver safe and effective programs, Interplast employs a dedicated Equipment and Supplies Coordinator on staff who is responsible for ordering and packing any medical equipment and supplies required for Interplast programs.

Types and amount of equipment and supplies which are taken on Interplast programs vary considerably, depending on the location, locally available resources, local laws around import of medicines and supplies, and the type of program. For mentoring and training activities, Interplast aims to ensure that volunteers are teaching local partners using locally available equipment and supplies, to ensure sustainability of teaching. This may mean that a team only takes very minimal equipment and supplies with them, compared to a full surgical program.

The Equipment and Supplies Coordinator, and the Program Coordinator will discuss requirements with teams in the lead-up to programs to ascertain what is required within available budget.



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

4.12 DONATED EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Interplast often receives the offer of medical equipment and supplies for donation to individuals or hospital facilities where Interplast works. While these facilities are generally under-resourced, Interplast has an obligation to its program partners to ensure the quality and appropriateness of donated items, and can only facilitate donations if they meet the conditions and guidelines as detailed in Interplast's Guidelines for the Donation of Equipment and Supplies (available on request from the Interplast office).

These guidelines reflect Interplast's endorsement of the principles of the Australian Guidelines for Drug Donations to Developing Countries and are in line with the World Health Organisation's guidelines for donations of medicines and medical devices (<http://www.who.int/medicines/areas/donations/en/>).

The acceptance and facilitation of donations remains at the discretion of Interplast and the donor recipients at all times.

Interplast recognises volunteers participating on Interplast programs are often in the position to collect items from their hospitals or via other means for donation to the hospital they are visiting. While Interplast does not take any responsibility for these items, it is expected that the guidelines detailed in the Guidelines for Donation of Equipment and Supplies are observed.

In addition, it must be noted that the cost of excess baggage and the arrangements for the waiver of these costs are negotiated with the airlines on a case by case bases. The Interplast office must be notified of the intention to take any additional donated items which will not fit in personal luggage allocations. Any additional items can only be carried if a waiver of excess charges has been negotiated with the airline carrier. Alternatively, volunteers will be required to pay for any excess luggage charges.



5. VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION AND REPORTING

5.1 PROGRAM AND CLINICAL REPORTING

It is a requirement of Interplast program participation and of volunteering for Interplast that all volunteers will complete required program reporting in a timely manner. Reporting for programs varies depending on the type and location of a program, but generally involves a team report (to which all team members contribute), as well as patient data, and reporting around training outcomes. Interplast volunteers are also responsible for collecting feedback from local partners and trainees. Interplast staff will advise of reporting requirements prior to departure, provide the necessary templates and forms, and will follow up with you on return.

Information collected from program reports is utilised in many ways – reporting back to Interplast’s donors, to ‘tell the story’ of our achievements in communications materials (newsletters, annual reports, social media etc), for reporting of clinical outcomes, to provide feedback back to local partners, and to ensure that challenges, successes and lessons learned are incorporated into ongoing program planning. While Interplast understands that reporting can take additional time and effort, it is crucial to ensure that our programs can continue into the future.



5.2 STORIES, CASE STUDIES AND PHOTOS

Photos taken and stories captured during Interplast programs are the bread-and-butter of Interplast's communications - they help to tell our story, raise awareness of the wonderful work that our volunteers do, and gather further support to enable the continuation of our work.

In line with our accreditation and compliance requirements, Interplast has a case study and photography policy & guidelines which govern both the capturing and use of images and stories from Interplast programs. This policy is in line both with best practice in the sector, and also assists in ensuring that images captured and used have the consent of those depicted. This policy is closely aligned with our Child Protection Policy.

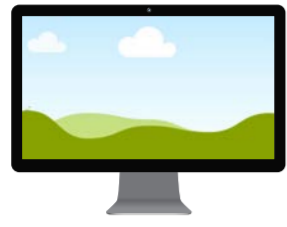
Interplast has also developed the ‘Tell Your Story’ pack which is designed to help our medical volunteers in capturing stories and images. This policy states that all images taken on Interplast programs must have the consent of those depicted (or their legal guardian, if under 18), before they can be used in any external publications.

Interplast has developed a simple process to support volunteers in ensuring that consent is obtained by patients and others featured in photographs and stories during an Interplast program, which is provided to volunteers in their pre-departure briefing.



NEED TO KNOW MORE?

IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION OR HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT US:



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