



Operation Childlife (OCL) is an Irish-registered charity (20079048) with the mission to bring life-saving and life-transforming surgeries to children in less developed countries. In addition to bringing international medical professionals to perform surgeries, we also educate local healthcare professionals to improve their own knowledge and expertise, therefore enhancing their healthcare systems. In 2023 teams of OCL volunteers completed one-week medical missions to our partner hospitals in Tanzania, Jordan, Mongolia and Vietnam, more on this below.

Surgical Procedures

There is a very significant range of surgical procedures performed during an OCL clinical site visit and these depend on the specialty involved and the location.

In Tanzania we focus on tumours of the kidney (Wilms tumour) liver (hepatoblastoma) and abdomen (neuroblastoma). Virtually every visit will include these tumours. Since 2007-8 we have demonstrated the skills and judgment needed to surgically manage these complex problems. The surgical team are now very competent with “routine” Wilms tumours but are progressively learning how to treat the more complex ones such as when the tumour invades the Inferior Vena Cava or when the tumour involves both kidneys. We have recently demonstrated safe thoracic surgery also. As regards liver tumours, they are making very significant progress and will be able to deal with these independently in around 2-3 years. Liver tumors are hazardous for the patient and surgeon as blood loss can be rapid, excessive and uncontrollable. Safe liver surgery needs exposure and guidance. Similarly the local teams are gaining confidence in congenital liver lesions such as Choledochal cysts and biliary atresia. We also focus on urological problems such as failed hypospadias, extrophy and cloacal repair, all very debilitating and stigmatizing for the child.

In Vietnam we focus on all the above but at the complex end of the spectrum as the local teams are now proficient with the common presentations and have become quite expert. We also provide surgical and medical expertise in open heart surgery and cardiology and interventional radiology and opened the cardiac program there in 2010. We are planning to upgrade this program to deal with the really complex congenital heart defects

In Mongolia we have focused thus far on congenital lesions of the anus and rectum (absence of one or both) and have demonstrated international best surgical practice for the treatment of these. We are also engaged in teaching neonatal and oncological surgery in Ulan Bataar.

OPERATION CHIDLIFE MISSIONS 2023

JORDAN

Operation Childlife in partnership with the Jordanian Red Crescent, the Bahrain Red Crescent and The Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RSCI) – Bahrain sent two teams of Operation Childlife volunteers on missions to Amman in 2023. The teams from King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain, visited the Jordanian Red Crescent Hospital and the Za’tarai Refugee camp, host to 80,000 Syrian refugees.

The April team completed 34 surgeries on sick children. The team consisted of: Dr Omar Sabra (Consultant of otolaryngology and head and neck surgery), Dr Khadija (Consultant Anaesthetist) and Nurse Hani Alsharif. The September team consisted of: Dr Wael Wagih (Consultant Ophthalmologist), Dr Keith Johnston (Consultant Anaesthetist) and Nurse Beena Saju.

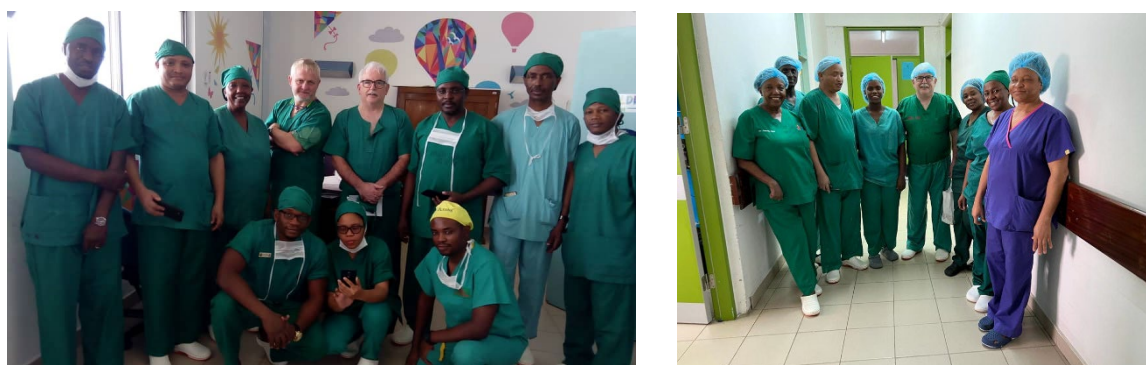


OCL Volunteer, Dr Abdulla A Fakhro, also joined a medical mission to Jordan in April, in partnership with Atlantic Humanitarian Relief (AHR). Assisting with the delivery of a complex reconstructive surgery workshop to 30 participants, alongside medical interventions at the The Al Istiklaal Hospital. The three-day workshop, emphasizing the implications of the war on Syrian patients, their healthcare challenges, and how reconstructive surgery can vastly improve their quality of life. For more information on this trip please see our website: <https://operationchildlife.com/2023/05/advanced-surgical-interventions-for-syrian-refugees-in-jordan/>

TANZANIA

Operation Childlife have sent volunteers, Professor Martin Corbally (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon and OCL Programme Director) Professor Fergal Quinn (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon and Urologist) on individual trips, and two teams, to the Muhimbili National Hospital, Dar es Salaam in 2023. The individual trips and first team visit were focused on individual complex cases and surgical interventions on sick children. The October team was led by a Paediatric Intensive Care specialist and focused on working with Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) staff to improve outcomes for the children in their care. The OCL team were directly involved in the care of 17 children in the (PICU) and engaged with a large number of PICU staff, performing bedside training with approximately 25 nurses and 10 doctors.

The April team consisted of: Professor Martin Corbally (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon OCL Programme Director), Dr Dahfir Alkudaisi (Consultant Anaesthetist) and Dr Ramaning Loni (Consultant Paediatric Intensivist). The October team consisted of: Dr Aisling Walsh (Consultant in Paediatric Intensive Care Medicine, CHI Temple Street, Dublin), Nurse Laura Keogh (Paediatric Intensive Care Unit, Temple Street, Dublin) and Dr Dawn Deacy, GP Trainee, St Michael's Hospital, Dun Laoghaire. Dr Deacy is a recipient of the Operation Childlife Travel Fellowship in partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland.



MONGOLIA

Operation Childlife in partnership with the Christina Noble Charitable Foundation sent a team to The National Centre for Maternal and Child Health in Ulan Bataar in October.

The team consisted of: Dr Mohammed Al Awadhi (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon, King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain), Dr Brendan O'Hare (Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist, Crumlin Hospital, Dublin), Nurse Aymen Kutkut (King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain), Dr Danielle McLaughlin, Locum Consultant Paediatric Surgeon, Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. Dr McLaughlin is a recipient of the Operation Childlife Travel Fellowship in partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland. Dr Nicola Cullen joined the trip as an observer.

While on the trip, the team also attended the Neonatal and Paediatric Minimally Invasive Surgery International Symposium, where Dr Al Awadhi and Dr O'Hare presented.



VIETNAM

Operation Childlife, in partnership with the Christina Noble Charitable Foundation sent a team of 12 volunteers to the City Children's Hospital and Children's Hospital No. 2 in Ho Chi Minh City for a week in November.

The team which included specialists in Paediatric Surgery, Cardiology, Interventional Radiology, Anaesthesia and Neurosurgery focused on complex surgeries and training, including beside/surgical training and conference room based lectures and tumour boards.

The team consisted of Prof. Martin Corbally (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon), Prof. Mark Redmond (Consultant Paediatric Cardiac Surgeon), Dr Paul Oslizlok (Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist), Prof. Mark Ryan (Consultant Interventional Radiologist), Dr Prince Pandey (Senior Registrar in Paediatric Surgery), Dr Ramesh Kutty (Consultant Paediatric Cardiac Surgeon), Dr Cocomazzi (Paediatric Surgeon), Ms Marie Moyles (Clinical Nurse Manager, Cardiothoracic Theatre), Prof. Paul Losty (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon), Dr Talal Al Mayman (Consultant Neurosurgeon), Dr Khadija Abu Hassan (Consultant Anaesthetist), and Dr Ampaipan/MJ (Consultant Paediatric Surgeon). Students from the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI) Medical University of Bahrain and an Italian Rotary funded doctor also joined the trip as observers.

