

The Brainchild of DR RAVI PERUMALPILLAI

THE OXONIAN HEART FOUNDATION



The Oxonian Heart Foundation, the brainchild of Consultant Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr Ravi Perumalpillai has made a life changing difference to the heart patients in the North, North East and North Central Province in Sri Lanka. An eminent professional, Dr Ravi Perumalpillai also served as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Oxford for 25 years and was also the Chairman of cardiac services at Oxford University.



DR AMARASENA AND DR RAVI PERUMALPILLAI

How did the Oxonian Heart Foundation come to being?

It came into being when a group of like minded Sri Lankans recognised the need for expansion of the facilities to treat patients with heart disease especially for the people in the North, North East and North Central Province in Sri Lanka. Till July 2014 the only cities performing cardiac surgery in Sri Lanka were Colombo, Kandy and Galle. In the early 1990's I used to bring a complete team from Oxford to Sri Lanka and perform open-heart surgery at the National Hospital Colombo and the Sri Jayewardenepura Hospital. These visits made a significant contribution to the development and establishment of modern day cardiac surgery in Sri Lanka. A team from Oxford will similarly support the proposed cardiac surgical programme at the Northern Central Hospital. The Oxonian Heart Foundation was registered as a charitable trust in August 2012 in Sri Lanka. In March 2013 it also became a registered charity in the United

Kingdom. In Sri Lanka the foundation is supported by a board which consists of eminent doctors who contribute greatly towards the development of the foundation.

What are the objectives of the foundation?

Our main objective is to establish a world class cardiac surgery in the Northern part of Sri Lanka. In addition, the Oxonian Heart Foundation also hopes to provide for teaching and training of health care workers in the cardiac and intensive care sectors. Such knowledge transfer would help the country as a whole. We also want to provide funding for research into heart disease in the long term.

What has been achieved so far?

We have now performed 7 heart operations at the Northern Central Hospital and more are in the pipe

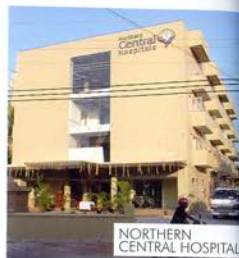
line. Facilities need to be expanded to meet the requirements. There is no shortage of patients, so we really need to expedite development so that we can treat more patients. We have not only made a start and brought heart surgery to the Northern regions but also made huge inroads into the training of critical care staff.

What does the Oxonian Heart Foundation mean to the people of the Northern, Central and Eastern Sri Lanka?

In many cases it could prove lifesaving. It allows for patients to be treated nearer their familiar environment.

How does the foundation fundraise and how can people help?

We have held several events abroad and local ones such as the recent cycling marathon. We have a



NORTHERN CENTRAL HOSPITAL

website which all should visit. Word of mouth and the media are crucial partners. We need more people to help us in our endeavors by donating to our fund and telling their friends about the Oxonian Heart Foundation.

www.oxonianhf.com

DR PERUMALPILLAI WITH A PATIENT AND HIS TEAM OF DOCTORS IN JAFFNA



TEXT: TINA EDWARD GUNAWARDHANA