

# **Nursing Leadership in a Disaster setting, are there any differences? ...AusMAT Nursing Team Leader experiences Operation Philippines Assist 2013**

**Bronte Martin**<sup>1,2,3</sup> and **Rebecca Weir**<sup>4,5,6</sup>

1. National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre
2. Trauma Service, Royal Darwin Hospital
3. Nursing Team leader, AusMAT Alpha rotation, Operation Philippines Assist
4. Staff Program Coordinator, Education and Research Unit, Northeast Health Wangaratta
5. Emergency department, Northeast Health Wangaratta
6. Nursing Team leader, AusMAT Bravo rotation, Operation Philippines Assist

Typhoon Haiyan made landfall on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 in the Philippines, Eastern Samar Province. The category five 'superstorm' is thought to be the strongest Typhoon ever to make landfall. Subsequently, over 16 million people were affected; with an estimated 28,626 injuries and 6190 deaths reported. In response, the Australian Government deployed a 50 Bed field surgical hospital and 37 person civilian medical team to Tacloban City to assist in immediate post-disaster medical care on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

The Australian Field Hospital comprised a 26 bed Emergency / Primary care outpatient facility and 34 bed Inpatient surgical facility with 2 operating tables. Registered 'Level 2' facility under the new World Health Organisation Guidelines for Foreign Medical Teams, the field hospital was operational for a period of 21 days, during which a total of 2738 presentations, 238 theatre cases and 541 occupied bed days of nursing care were provided.

The Nursing leadership was pivotal not only in fostering and maintaining morale but also ensuring effective and efficient running of the surgical field hospital with limited resources in an austere and environmentally challenging setting. The Nurse Team leader role in Tacloban was diverse, unique, challenging, rewarding and privileged.

This presentation will discuss nursing leadership in Disaster settings and explore the nursing leadership implemented during the deployment. The presentation will also discuss the unique experiences of leading a team working in the AusMAT field hospital in Tacloban. It will illustrate the challenges of Leading a team in acute care nursing in austere disaster environment, address the diversity of casemix clinical presentations. The presentation will also explore current and future directions to develop and sustain nursing team leaders at a national and international level. As well as highlight areas for consideration in the development of future Nursing Team Leaders.

## **Funding / Acknowledgments**

Nil

## **Key Words**

Disaster nursing  
Nurse leadership  
Clinical governance  
Team performance  
Surgical Field hospital  
AusMAT