



P&O Cruises' Guests Deliver New Medical Facility to Remote Vanuatu Island

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P&O Cruises' Pacific Partnership with Save the Children has delivered a desperately-needed medical facility to remote Vanuatu Island Aneityum replacing a run-down pre-1970s building with a new dispensary offering modern medical equipment and solar powered electricity.

The new dispensary raises healthcare standards on the island with features including a waiting area, a maternity delivery room plus separate consultancy, in-patient and treatment rooms, and new storage facilities and equipment. While the previous building operated without electricity for the past three years, the new facility is powered by solar panels.

With only one barge a month bringing supplies to the "last island in Vanuatu", the dispensary took six months to build and is the biggest project to date for the P&O Pacific Partnership – a collaboration between Save the Children and Australia's leading cruise line P&O Cruises.

The P&O Pacific Partnership gives the cruise line and its guests an opportunity to support island communities who have been welcoming P&O ships for more than 80 years.

The partnership has raised almost \$690,000 since its launch in January 2013 with four projects – two kindergartens, an aid post and the dispensary – completed during that time. More than \$270,000 from the partnership was spent building the Aneityum facility.

<>Members of the 1000-strong island community joined healthcare workers and Save the Children staff at the official opening yesterday. Many had been involved in the construction process, hauling bags of cement and coral from a transport barge and digging the holes for the building's foundation.

Located in the southernmost Tafea province, Aneityum is the home community to nearby Mystery Island, one of P&O Cruises' most popular South Pacific destinations.

P&O Cruises Senior Vice President Tammy Marshall said it was important to leave a positive footprint in the communities the cruise line visited.

"The Pacific Partnership offers a tangible and heart-warming way for P&O Cruises and its passengers to give back to the island communities that have provided an idyllic backdrop for so many cherished holiday memories," Ms Marshall said.

Country Director of Save the Children Vanuatu Tom Skirrow said the dispensary would provide improved healthcare outcomes for about 1800 patients on Aneityum every year.

"We are looking at inter-generational improvements that will be realised for decades to come," Mr Skirrow said.

Expectant mother Kye Nirinuput had three babies in the old dispensary and said she was "so happy to be having my fourth in the new, spacious, private maternity ward."

The P&O Partnership has committed to building up to eight new aid posts in Vanuatu over the next two years.

P&O Cruises' guests support the P&O Pacific Partnership by contributing a dollar from their onboard accounts or participating in the 'Born to Knit' program, which is now exclusive to the cruise line and sees knitted blankets donated to newborns at Vila Central Hospital.

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