

Collaboration is key: Menzies Timor-Leste office celebrates fourth anniversary

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The ongoing focus on collaboration by Menzies School of Research (Menzies) to sustainably building healthcare systems and health leadership capacity in Timor-Leste is being celebrated.

Today marks 4 years since Menzies established an office in the neighbouring country. The team continues to work in partnership with the Timor-Leste Government, key stakeholders and the people of Timor-Leste, to achieve better health outcomes.

Strong relationships and a focus on developing local evidence to inform and tailor infectious disease management and prevention have been the driver of many key achievements. This includes the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, better diagnosis of antibiotic resistant infections and growth of Timorese health leaders.

Menzies projects contributing to this include the now-completed [ARIA-RISE project](#). The project provided data to inform the rates of COVID-19 and other vaccine preventable diseases (like measles, rubella, hepatitis B and dengue fever), and results have significantly influenced vaccination policies in Timor-Leste.

Another key project is [STRONG-TL](#). The team has spent 5 years working with the Ministry of Health to strengthen the surveillance and control of infectious diseases in Timor-Leste, and evaluated the impact of this on health systems and policy responsiveness.

An important ongoing project is the [MATCH-TL project](#) (Malaria, Tuberculosis (TB), COVID-19, HIV diagnosis and surveillance in Timor-Leste). It continues to examine rates of infectious diseases in the country. Part of this work includes the National TB Prevalence Survey (NTPS) which is working with the National TB Program in all municipalities across Timor-Leste to better understand the true impact of TB in the country.

The [Fleming Fund Country Grant to Timor-Leste](#), funded by UK Aid and managed by Mott MacDonald Group, supports work to tackle antimicrobial resistance. Menzies will continue working with partners to strengthen antimicrobial resistance surveillance through a One Health approach, which recognises the connection between humans, animals and the environment.

Read more about Menzies' projects underway in Timor-Leste:

https://www.menzies.edu.au/page/Research/Global_and_Tropical_Health/Timor-Leste/

Quotes attributable to Menzies School of Health Research Timor-Leste Projects Co-lead, [Associate Professor Josh Francis](#):

“Our fourth anniversary provides an opportunity for celebration and reflection on key achievements, which belong to the people of Timor-Leste.”

“We're grateful for the opportunity to support improvements in healthcare systems in the country, and to see the personal and professional growth of Timorese health leaders, who are working towards improved health outcomes and also mentoring future leaders.”

“In the past year, the Menzies Timor-Leste office has continued to grow, with more than 80 staff working together across a range of projects.”

“We’re involved in ongoing, important work that is tackling infectious diseases challenges including dengue, tuberculosis, HIV, rheumatic heart disease, brucellosis and antibiotic resistance, to support the health of Timorese.”

“It’s been a privilege to work in close collaboration with the people of Timor-Leste, and we look forward to continuing this work into the future.”

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies is one of Australia’s leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and a leader in global and tropical research into life-threatening illnesses. Menzies continues to translate research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.