

# RafflesHospital



*Mrs. Rauka (standing, third from left) with her family after her kidney transplant, and a Raffles Hospital staff member.*

# “New Kidney For A New Life!”

When homemaker Mrs. Rauka discovered that she had end-stage renal disease and required a kidney transplant, she was left with no choice but to seek treatment outside her hometown in Papua New Guinea.

Limited resources and expertise prevented doctors there from undertaking such a high-risk operation. However, Mrs. Rauka's biggest problem was solved when her brother, Roy Vagi, readily agreed to donate one of his kidneys.

Although Australia was the nearest option to conduct such a transplant, there were other obstacles. “It was only 90 minutes by air from Papua New Guinea but it was prohibitively expensive and besides, getting a visa to enter Australia was not that easy,” she explains.

Fortunately for Mrs. Rauka, who works in the insurance sector, she was able to tap onto her wide network of friends, asking them for treatment recommendations. Time and again, Singapore's Raffles Hospital came up for mention, with many citing its efficiency and expertise in renal transplants.

She was further encouraged because she did not require a visa to enter Singapore. Accompanied by her husband and brother, in 2005 Mrs. Rauka took off on a six-hour flight to Singapore.

At Raffles Hospital, she consulted with the medical team comprising of Prof. A. Vathsala, Dr. Akira Wu, Dr. Eric Teh and Prof. Li Man Kay. They didn't waste time in ordering a number of comprehensive tests to verify her exact medical condition and suitability for undergoing a kidney transplant. Her brother also underwent separate tests to ensure compatibility.

As standard procedure and to prevent organ trafficking, Mrs. Rauka's case was brought before the hospital's Ethics Committee, whose responsibility it is to review all living donor organ transplants. Four days later, the approval was granted.

Such was the speed at which the whole process was undertaken. In just 11 days after her arrival in Singapore, Mrs. Rauka underwent the life-saving kidney transplant.

“We were pleasantly surprised by the efficiency and speed at which everything was done. The doctors and nurses were always friendly and patient with us, and that made us feel very comfortable,” comments Mrs. Rauka, whose brother was discharged after only a two-day hospital stay.

Mrs. Rauka herself was given a clean bill of health after only eight days and was allowed to return to Papua New Guinea to continue her recuperation. “We are very thankful, overwhelmed and grateful for the helpful and professional staff at Raffles Hospital. Their service is second to none and we will definitely recommend the hospital to our friends and relatives back home,” smiles Mrs. Rauka.