

HOPE FUNDING

HEALTHY HIPS AUSTRALIA

Through our HOPE Programme, the OGA aims to help our former students to make a difference.

This year we provided **Sarah Twomey (nee Matthews OO)** with HOPE (Humanitarian or Philanthropic Endeavours) Funding to assist her endeavours with Healthy Hips Australia.

HERE IS SARAH'S STORY OF HOPE

In 2012, at just 3-weeks of age, my daughter Eve was diagnosed with developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH). She spent 10 months, 23-hours a day, firstly in a Pavlik harness, followed by a Rhino hip abduction brace. Just before her first birthday, Eve was allowed to go brace-free during the day. Now four, Eve stopped bracing at two years of age but continues to require yearly reviews with an orthopaedic surgeon

to monitor the development of her hips.

Also known as hip dysplasia, this common condition occurs when the ball and socket of the hip do not fit together in their 'normal' position. Health professionals aim to diagnose DDH early in babies. It can result in months, and in some cases years, of medical treatment. Left undiagnosed, it's one of the leading causes of early-onset arthritis of the hip, which can lead to the need for an early hip replacement. Despite this, in Australia awareness of DDH and factors influencing it is limited.

I was bewildered when Eve's two-month stint in a Pavlik harness turned into a two-year treatment ordeal. While my youngest daughter's journey with DDH was less stressful, I have become all too familiar with the need to assist affected families who are overwhelmed and uninformed about the condition. Even as an occupational therapist, I found it hard to navigate the experience of DDH with my children. That inspired me to set up the not-for-profit organisation Healthy Hips Australia (HHA). We are working to increase support, education and resources for those impacted by hip dysplasia while also working to raise awareness of DDH.



In May this year, we were the lucky recipients of an OGA HOPE Programme donation, for which I am very grateful. This donation is going towards an initiative in Western Australia, due to commence in 2017, called HipWise. This is targeting late diagnosed DDH which has been rising each year. We have already received very positive feedback, including a call for bi-partisan political support for increased public education about hip dysplasia and a willingness from the major maternity services, both public and private, to utilise our resources for education.

With up to one in 50 newborns diagnosed with hip dysplasia in Australia, increasing awareness for DDH has never been more important. Should you be willing to make an overwhelming time a little bit less daunting, contact www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au or sarah@healthyhipsaustralia.org.au.

Sarah Twomey :: HOPE Recipient 2016

