



## Eaton parents join daughter's medical mission to Africa

Nurse Tamara Lowe loves her job so much that she convinced her parents to work alongside her on her latest mission to Africa

Wednesday 7 November 2018: Eaton nurse Tamara Lowe loves her job so much that she finally convinced her parents to fly half way across the world to work alongside her on her latest medical mission to Africa.

Miss Lowe, who has been volunteering with the international medical charity Mercy Ships on board their hospital ship each year since 2014, had always wanted her dad Mark and mum Liz to share her experience.

"I was always saying to Dad, who is a radio engineer back home, that they need a Sound Technician on the Africa Mercy."

"And I knew Mum would always be able to do a number of different jobs on board," Miss Lowe said.

"Now I get to share what I do with my parents. Growing up we often used to go to work with Dad; now it's awesome to get to share this too!"

It wasn't until their youngest daughter Belinda left home this year that Mr and Mrs Lowe took the chance to volunteer.

They travelled to the Canary Islands in July to join the hospital ship on its sail to the West African nation of Guinea and will return home this week, while Tam will continue serving on board until June 2019.

"Guinea is the same as all of Africa; the problem is too big so why should I try, what can I do? But if we all, and I mean all, do our bit we can make a difference," Mr Lowe said of his motivation to volunteer. "I know that the majority of people in Guinea are some of the poorest in the world," Mrs Lowe added.

"One thing I like about Mercy Ships is that they spend a lot of time and effort in training the locals. Whether it be the doctors or dentists or any other field of expertise we can train, it means that when we leave the country is better off because of those who live here now have more skills."

The Africa Mercy hospital ship arrived in the port city of Conakry, Guinea, in August 2018 with plans to provide 2,500 life-changing surgeries on board, treat over 8,000 people at a land-based dental clinic and provide health care training to local medical professionals during 10 months in port.

"I absolutely love the work," Tam said.

"It is hard and challenging at times, but I find it very rewarding to be able to help the people we serve to heal from their physical and often emotional wounds. It's a beautiful thing to be able to see them come out of their shells and take a step back into society."

"I am often asked what it's like having my parents on board this time. It is different to the other times I have been here. It is nice to be able to have a hug from Mum and Dad and to share this experience."

"I will definitely be sad when they leave."

"The best thing has been seeing first hand where Tamara has been living and working for the past five years and also meeting some of the friends she has made," Mrs Lowe recalled.

"Nothing can prepare you for this except love and compassion and a willingness to serve," Mark concluded.

END

#### About Mercy Ships

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to deliver free, world-class health care services, capacity building and sustainable development aid to those without access in the developing world. Founded in 1978, Mercy Ships has worked in more than 70 countries providing services valued at more than \$1.3 billion, with more than 2.6 million direct beneficiaries. Each year, more than 1,200 volunteers from over 40 nations serve with Mercy Ships. Professionals including surgeons, dentists, nurses, health care trainers, teachers, cooks, seamen, engineers, and agriculturalists donate their time and skills to the effort. Mercy Ships seeks to transform individuals and serve nations one at a time. Mercy Ships Australia, one of 16 international support offices, is based on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. For more information, visit [www.mercyships.org.au](http://www.mercyships.org.au)

#### Notes to Editors

High resolution photos of Mercy Ships are available upon request, with attribution to Mercy Ships.

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