

Help is on its way

Top surgeon aligns with health brands

A LEADING plastic surgeon whose expertise is sought by major hospitals and physicians for birth defects, trauma and reconstructive surgery has successfully partnered with international pharmaceutical companies to help burns victims in Third World countries.

Dr Dilip Gahankari, Tyco Health, Astra-Zeneca, Johnson and Johnson and a team of medical volunteers visited India to treat some of its most severely disfigured and disadvantaged people. Gahankari now hopes to inspire local corporates to get behind similar projects to raise brand awareness – and change lives.

He says he is seeking the support of businesses that see a value in partnership that extends beyond charity and philanthropy, aligning brand values with life-saving medical aid. In return, businesses and organisations can expect to reap the benefits associated with a worthwhile cause, connect with consumers and stand out from competitors.

"Funding in the past has been in the form of material, with brands such as Johnson & Johnson supplying dressings and hospitals such as John Flynn providing equipment

for skin grafts, which has been fantastic," says Gahankari.

"What I would like to do is make it an annual fixture – not just to India, but other countries such as East Timor.

"To do that successfully, we require funding so we can take a small team of surgeons with us and hopefully reach a broader number of people.

"There is so much suffering in the Third World, as well as here at home, and those who have the skills and the privilege of working in this field have a responsibility to give something back to their community."

In 2003, Gahankari was made a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (FRACS) in plastic surgery.

He is a visiting medical officer at the Gold Coast Hospital and Royal Brisbane Hospital and has a private practice at Benowa, specialising in plastic and cosmetic procedures.

In December 2006, he led a team of physicians and volunteers to India to operate on some of the country's poorest people.

Setting up in the town of Shegaon,



On a mission, Dr Dilip Gahankari

600km from Mumbai (Bombay), the Plastic Surgery Camp was an initiative of the Gajanan Maharaj Temple and Trust, which oversee activities to help local communities.