



November 2023

Dear Friends,

We hope and trust this finds you well, and we really appreciate your ongoing prayerful interest, when there are so many deeply concerning situations around the world at present.

### Answered prayers:

- All the travelling went well, to and from Goa (India), Seoul (Korea), Kathmandu, Lamjung and back to Pokhara.
- The newly appointed nurses and doctors in the partner hospitals are settling in to their roles and gaining confidence to promote patient-centred palliative care in their settings.
- The 2-day training at Lamjung Hospital was successful with about 28 participants from the hospital and the surrounding rural area. It was even featured on local TV!
- We are feeling settled in our new community here in Pokhara, sharing with internationals as well as Nepali brothers and sisters, and enjoying the relaxation opportunities of the tourist area around Lakeside.



*Dan in Seoul, Korea*

### Sunita Project :



*Scene from educational video*

The Sunita Palliative Care project is gathering pace. This week saw the launch of a set of three fabulous educational videos to be used with schools and community groups in the coming weeks and months. This will enable the education team to deliver a consistently high standard of awareness-raising sessions in many different places and to a wide range of local people in Lamjung, Rukhum and Surkhet districts. The videos portray three different health-seeking scenarios and explain how a palliative care approach would be beneficial.

In the coming weeks a number of important events will be taking place: Dan's colleague in developing the Sunita Project, Dr Ruth Russell, and her husband Gordon will be leaving Nepal after 40 years of service in health care and engineering respectively. They will be greatly missed and we wish them God's richest blessings in their retirement. Meanwhile, this will mean a significant shift in the management of the project. We are excited that leadership of the Palliative Care Unit at Green Pastures Hospital will be handed over to our good friend Dr Amrita Shrestha, who is a paediatric palliative care specialist. Dr Amrita will be assisted by a



*Palliative Care and Chronic Disease Unit, Green Pastures Hospital, Pokhara.*

brilliant team which has grown up before and through the Sunita Project.

Next week, Dr Rachel Quibbell and her husband Toby will arrive from the UK to join the team for a year. Rachel is a Consultant in Palliative Medicine and will provide clinical support and training as we continue to grow the knowledge and skills of local practitioners in this relatively new speciality.

Also next week the Sunita Project team will be taking the work in Surkhet District to the next stage, with a two-day training programme, like that delivered in Lamjung in October. The aim of this is to gather hospital and community practitioners and give them training in an approach to identify people with palliative care needs and the skills to manage them holistically.

Meanwhile, the research team have completed data collection for the house-to-house survey and case study research in four areas of rural Lamjung and Rukum Districts. They have been exploring how people manage chronic and terminal illness in their communities. We are in the process of analysing the data, the results and insights from which will enable us to target palliative care training appropriately. It will also give us increased understanding to encourage 'compassionate communities' where people will have more skill and knowledge to care for family and community members with advanced illness. Next week we will also present progress to the Sunita Task Force meeting in Kathmandu, with representatives from national stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health.

## Celebration:



*Ashish and Namrata's engagement*

While all around us our neighbours were celebrating the Dashain festival, we found ourselves making an unexpected journey to Chitwan (National Park), not for the usual reasons - to see rhino and crocodiles - but to celebrate the engagement of some special friends. We have known Gajendra for 35 years, since he was a teenager and worked for us as a gardener in Kathmandu. His son Ashish recently completed his medical training and now he is getting married to Namrata, a lovely young teacher. The engagement ceremony is normally just for family and the church

leaders from both sides, so we felt deeply privileged to share in this wonderful occasion.

And as we look forward to celebrating the coming of The One 'in whom we live and breathe and have our being', we also look forward to being able to spend some time over Christmas with our family, especially our six grandchildren whom we miss so much!

Let's keep our eyes on Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us. It's a little early, but we'll take this opportunity to wish you a happy and blessed Christmas.

We are always so grateful for your prayers,  
With our love,

Dan and Phillipa

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### Prayer pointers:

- Transitions of leadership in the Sunita project. For Dr Amrita Shrestha taking up leadership of the Palliative Care Unit.
- Dr Rachel and Toby joining us mid-November.
- TASK Force meeting November 9th
- Ashish and Namrata as they start their married life together – wedding in December.