

August 2023

Dear Friends,

It's hot, wet and humid here in Pokhara, with mosquitos, mouldy shoes and currently a widespread problem with eye infections, but the friendly gecko on the window screen is reminding me in his squeaky voice that not all creatures are enemies.

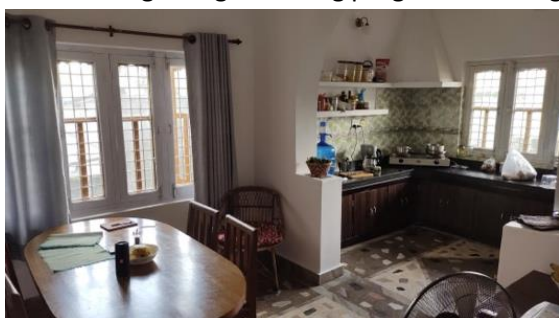
Our summer family time was very special as we enjoyed catching up with our rapidly growing grandchildren in the UK and Switzerland and being available for 'sleepovers' to give their parents a break. We also celebrated Mum's 91st birthday and Phillipa's sister's 60th. We met up with Dan's siblings in North Wales and managed a few days walking in Pembrokeshire.



Beautiful Pembrokeshire coastline.

We are also very grateful for a warm welcome from friends and colleagues here in Pokhara, as we arrived back a couple of weeks ago.

Thank you for those who were praying for our journey back. It's always unpredictable in monsoon time. As Dan was beginning a training programme straight away, we decided to fly from Kathmandu to Pokhara rather than travel by bus, which currently involves at least 10 hours on very bumpy, muddy, half-finished roads. But due to the heavy rain and low cloud, Pokhara airport did not open that morning, so we sat in the crowded departure lounge waiting for hourly updates. Gradually flights were being cancelled, and eventually ours too, 4½ hours after it should have left. As we stood in the queue to reschedule, wondering when we would be able to fly, Pokhara airport was finally declared open. The kind staff at the desk quickly processed new boarding passes and luggage labels for the now imminent



our new flat

next flight, and within 20 minutes we were off! We were so grateful to be in our new flat with just enough time to shop for food and cook supper.

Sunita Project

Research and training continued apace while we were in the UK. Nurses appointed to the rural hospitals received six weeks of intensive training here in the Palliative Care (PC) Centre at Green Pastures, Pokhara, while the research team, having completed data collection in Rukum, returned to another part of Lamjung to complete 150 house-to-house questionnaires and selected follow-up visits.



Researchers relax after a busy day collecting data in Rukum District

Whilst in the UK, Dan was busy designing a training programme for doctors who will each be a Palliative Care Champion in their respective rural hospitals. They gathered here at the PC Centre for a week of observation, teaching and discussion, facilitated by a number of national and international experts.

We have been very encouraged that the original District Hospital in Lamjung, now under new



Lamjung Hospital



Palliative Care training for rural hospital doctors, at Green Pastures Hospital, Pokhara.

management, has expressed desire to remain part of this programme, so the second week involved taking the doctors to Besisahar, for clinical teaching, to contextualise their learning in the rural hospital setting. This was a very fruitful time as they really seemed to catch the vision for what is possible; One of the doctors said, "I now realise palliative care is appropriate for many of our patients, not just those with cancer."

Staff changes

Within the Sunita project, a number of staff have found other opportunities and moved on. While we wish them all the best in their chosen path, it does create additional challenges for recruitment and training of new team members. We especially celebrate with the research team leader who will be travelling to the UK for a PhD at Huddersfield and our specialist nurse who will begin a master's degree in palliative care at King's College London. It is a such a joy to see them develop their skills, gaining the confidence and vision to go further. Our hope and prayer is that in due course they will be able to use their higher training to invest further in healthcare development in Nepal.

A new community

While Dan is fully occupied with the Sunita Project, Phillipa is enjoying setting up home (again!!) and wondering how she will use her time. She no longer has a formal role and will be looking out for ways to help and support those who do. It will be good to have a slower, more flexible schedule, and she is excited to see what opportunities turn up. She has already connected with a weekly women's Bible study group which will be a great place for fellowship and encouragement.

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

Dan and Phillipa
danandphillipamunday@gmail.com



Prayer pointers:

- Newly appointed nurses and doctors in the rural hospitals as they begin to promote Palliative Care.
- Recruitment of replacement team members for Sunita project.
- Wisdom and guidance as we settle into a new community.

Dates: travel (road and air), wisdom and help!!

September 21 : Pharmacy meeting, KTM

September 22-30 : Holiday

October 3-7 : Asia Pacific Hospice Network
Conference, South Korea.

October 8-12 : Lamjung training visit.