

‘A virtual hospital that never runs out of beds, has no political master, and welcomes every patient.’¹



Since we were last in touch the world has turned itself inside out and upside down. The destructive nature of the pandemic has had far reaching consequences across all societies and economies and this has in consequence hit smaller charities particularly hard. Unfortunately, all other forms of illness have not stopped for Covid 19 and with the focus naturally falling on how to cope with the pandemic, this has meant that many people who suffer ill health or trauma have been left at the end of the queue. This is particularly relevant in the developing countries and means that this charity's work has even greater importance now. The Swinfen Charitable Trust works in 78 countries with over 6000 cases over the years and throughout 2020 has continued dealing with many varied and urgent cases as normal, as well as several Covid cases.

We are a charity that relies on people donating their experience and time mostly for free, and we would like to thank everyone who supports us in this way and especially our Medical Consultants and System Operators who are a valued and wonderful team 24/7. This year has seen many changes within the Trust, from changes in trustees, administration and our team of IT specialists. Particular thanks need to go to Sankalpo Ghose and his team from Man Goes Mobile for his work on behalf of the Trust for many years; for the Mayo's, both Arabella and Charlie for their time as trustees and their daughter Elizabeth for her help with Social Media. Arabella surprised us all this year by shaving her head for the charity and raised £3271.87 and gathered in other supporters to do the same including fellow trustee Rob Dawson. Thank you. To Victoria Johnson for her work in administration, we wish her well in her future endeavours. We are honoured to have had the Trust written about in several publications this year; Patty A. Schweickert & Carolyn M. Rutledge have written in their book, *Telehealth Essential for Advanced Practice Nursing*, that the charity's benefits include: 'Establishing a diagnosis, Reassurance, Changing patient care Management, Avoiding overseas travel, Contributing to medical education using a small carbon footprint.'² In *Revolutionizing Tropical Medicine, Point-of-Care Tests, New Imaging, Technologies and Digital Health*, edited by Kerry Atkinson and David Mabey; Farhad Fatehi, Monica Taylor, Liam J. Caffery, and Anthony C. Smith have written a chapter entitled 'Telemedicine for Clinical Management of Adults in Remote and Rural Areas' which mentions that since its inception the SCT has 'served many poor and disabled people in low and middle-income countries by establishing telemedicine links between local doctors and healthcare providers to a network of specialists around the world'³. The following chapter also describes the specialist paediatric services offered by the Trust. It is interesting to note that because of the pandemic, the UK has seen the NHS finally grasp the benefits of Telemedicine – We have been doing it successfully for 21 years!

Throughout the year, with Covid dominating our news and lives, the Trust has continued to deal with many and varied cases, many of which have been of children, for example since we moved over to the new IT system at the end of August, nearly half of our cases have been paediatric. We endeavour to help all that contact us and all of our work is centred on those that need our support. Thank you to every one of you who support us and we wish you a safe and happier New Year.

¹ Patty A. Schweickert & Carolyn M. Rutledge, *Telehealth Essentials for Advanced Practice Nursing*, p. 79 (New Jersey: Slack Incorporated, 2020).

² Patty A. Schweickert & Carolyn M. Rutledge, *Telehealth Essentials for Advanced Practice Nursing*, p. 79 (New Jersey: Slack Incorporated, 2020).

³ Kerry Atkinson & Davie Mabey, (eds.), *Revolutionizing Tropical Medicine, Point-of-Care Tests, New Imaging, Technologies and Digital Health*, 'Telemedicine for Clinical Management of Adults in Remote and Rural Areas' by Farhad Fatehi, Monica Taylor, Liam J. Caffery & Anthony C. Smith (New Jersey/Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2019), pp. 441-461, p. 446.

PROFILE: Professor Thamer Hamdan

Truly there are few people like Professor Thamer Hamdan. Thamer is a long-standing friend of the SCT and personal friend of Pat and Roger Swinfen and his contributions to both his community within Iraq and the global orthopaedic community deserve wider recognition. Thamer was the first in his family to dedicate himself to medicine after witnessing the suffering within his community of poorer families and the struggles they had to encounter daily. He still serves those in need in the rural areas around Basrah for free. Thamer has been a driving force within the University of Basrah, practicing orthopaedics within the febrile and sometimes desperate situation at times in Iraq. His endeavours stretch across the divide of patient care, into teaching and administration and his publications are testament to his expertise. During thirty years of conflict and difficulties within Iraq, Thamer served both the military and civilian populations, frequently having to deal with extremely tragic cases, including teenagers with both upper limbs amputated because of advanced Maffucci Syndrome. Thamer says that the Swinfen system “was not only useful but outstanding in solving so many difficult clinical conditions” and he remains a vocal ambassador for the charity. He continues to serve as Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Basrah Medical College and currently is International Surgical Advisor Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, a visiting Professor Imperial College London, Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine and a Research Fellow at St. George’s Hospital, London – It is impossible to list all of his achievements, or to mention his numerous presentations of papers, or publications, but we at The Swinfen Charitable Trust are so grateful for his dedication and skill and on-going care for all who fall under his protection and are immensely thankful that Thamer Hamdan is one of our consultants.



Dr Judith Darmady OBE (1935-2020)

It is with very great sadness that we learnt that Dr Judith Darmady passed away after contracting Covid 19 in April. Judith was a highly esteemed paediatrician, spending much of her working life at Basingstoke Hospital, where she was particularly concerned with children with disabilities, cancer or who had suffered from sexual abuse. She worked with the SCT from our earliest days and was a source of great strength and advice to the charity. Luckily for children across the world, Judith did not confine her expertise to the people of Hampshire. Judith travelled the world after she retired from Basingstoke, determined to help all and any children, with an irrepressible energy and great intellect, she was an extraordinary talent. She was particularly well known for her work with Romanian orphanage children. When the news of the Romanian orphanages came to the public’s attention nothing could hold her back and she travelled out to the country. Undeterred by the terrible conditions that faced her, she set up a Trust that funded British health care professionals to rapidly and securely help the children who were in desperate need. She organised care and support from the neighbouring hospitals, forcing the local authorities to take notice and care of the previously neglected children, who once cleaned, clothed and fed, and their individual medical needs assessed, were taught basic skills to enable their future – cooking, personal hygiene etc. She also travelled to India, Uganda, Ecuador, and many other countries. Wherever Judith went she established long term improvements for the children she encountered. Judith was the chair of two charities, the Ungureni Trust Romania and United Aid for Azerbaijan. She was awarded her OBE in the Queen’s birthday honours list, 2010. We salute her memory and just wish the world had more like her.⁴

⁴ Sources: <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m1988>;

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/judith-darmady-obituary-gb0xczpm0>; Romsey Advertiser, 14 April 2020.

Professor Roger Williams CBE FRCS FRCP FRCPE FRACP FMedSci (1931-2020)

We sadly also say goodbye to one of our longest serving and most valued consultants, Professor Roger Williams who died aged 88 on 26 July. Roger was a hepatologist at King's College Hospital London in the late 1960's when he started working with surgeon Professor Roy Calne from Cambridge, to develop the UK's first liver transplant programme. Before the work of these two esteemed medics, the life of a patient with liver disease was short and uncompromising. Williams and Calne used research to guide their treatment capability, combining surgical techniques and immunosuppression drugs to develop treatments that crossed the ranges of liver problems from cirrhosis, the hepatitis diseases and into sepsis and drug induced damage. Together they developed a multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of liver problems and changed the entire medical approach towards patient care. He left King's in 1996 at 65, and refusing to retire set up a new clinic – The Institute of Hepatology at UCL which pursued the liver transplant programme, taking it from donation from a deceased donor to a live donor transplant programme; his research also developed a 'molecular adsorbents recirculating system' MARS – that filters out toxins from the blood, and further treatments for patients with cirrhosis. He returned to King's College Hospital in 2016 and was still working this summer. During his ninth decade he founded the Lancet Commission on Liver disease with Richard Horton, which collates and determines best practice for Hepatology. Pat Swinfen said of Professor Williams: "World famous, Roger had been our top consultant in Liver Research for many years. When doctors in the developing world, learnt that their case had been responded to by him, they were simply amazed, such was his world reputation. He took all cases from us relating to diseases of the Liver, dealing with simple cases as well as very complicated ones. Courteous always, it was always a pleasure to involve this truly great Physician." Roger is survived by his wife Stephanie de Laszlo and children. We would like to extend our sympathy and love to her and all his family.⁵

Thank you

Professor Anne Burdick, MD, MPH, the Associate Dean for Telehealth and Clinical Outreach and Professor Dermatology at the University of Miami, and a charter member of the American Telemedicine Association, has sadly resigned. She has been our expert in Leprosy for many years, and our dear friend too. She will be greatly missed and we thank her hugely for all her help over the years and wish her well for the future.



Char Bhanjyang Center for Health (Swinfen House) Telemedicine Clinic, October 2020

Since its inception in April 2013, Char Bhanjyang Centre for Health has provided vital medical care in this remote foothill of Parbat Nepal. The centre provides free medicine and medical consultation through Swinfen Telemedicine to thousands of people. The patients present many and varied complaints including epilepsy, mental health issues, heart disease, diabetes and dental problems. As well as providing vital medical care the clinic is conducting

⁵ Sources: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/aug/10/roger-williams-obituary>, <https://britishlivertrust.org.uk/a-tribute-to-professor-roger-williams-cbe>.



Covid 19 awareness programmes for the local community. Char Bhanjyang Centre for Health is grateful to The National Centre for Invention particularly Dr Mahabir Pun and local youth clubs for donating PPE, medicine, and a non-contact thermometer. We are also grateful to volunteer nurse students who give their valuable time to help the clinic. Besides it's health care duties, the clinics staff are organising health programmes in the Char Bhanjyang villages. The clinic at Khalte is regarded as the pride of the local area.⁶

⁶ The editor is grateful for the report written by Hon Lt Chandra Gurung, CBCFH, and for the permission to use the photographs.

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