



Roads to Rehab  
Nepal

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5 – APRIL 2018

## WELCOME TO OUR FIFTH NEWSLETTER!

### OUR NHEDF PROJECT:

Since our newsletter in early January NHEDF has cared for thirteen patients. Whilst the Shelter has capacity for 16 – 20 patients and their carers, patient numbers are determined by funding as NHEDF relies 100% on donations.



Roads to Rehab Nepal is excited to report that NHEDF's patients are now benefiting from a wonderful range of physio equipment thanks to the outstanding generosity of Southside Physio Woden & Tuggeranong. Staff at these practices raised funds for an ultrasound machine and many other pieces of equipment through their Christmas giving tree. A staff member and her friends also asked for donations for us in lieu of presents at a joint 40th birthday party!



**NHEDF NOW HAS A FANTASTIC WEBSITE** <http://www.nhedf.org.np> And we have made some changes to ours! We have started a collection of patient stories so that you can see the difference your support makes. Please visit <http://roads-to-rehab-nepal.org/nepal-healthcare-equipment-development-foundation/nhedf-shelters-patients/> and read on for some real milestones.

### PATIENT STORIES:



Our hearts went out to seventeen-year-old Bikram, who has the most beautiful smile in the world. His father abandoned the family when Bikram was young, and he had not been to school for 3 years because he was essentially bed bound and left alone at home whilst his mother worked. He was brought to NHEDF and after nine months a reason was eventually found for the progressive loss of motor function, control, strength and mobility of his lower limbs. He was finally diagnosed with a rare genetic neurological disorder for

which there is no cure. He was very depressed, refusing to eat, however other patients helped him recover.

Thanks to NHEDF he is looking forward to his future again. He now has a wheelchair, knows what physiotherapy he has to do and if you visit his home town in Aacham in the far west of Nepal, you will see him heading down the main street to school!



Our Trustee, Virginia, went to Nepal in February and had a wonderful few days at NHEDF. She was there for another milestone - the discharge of 36-year-old Bibadari who was admitted in March 2017 and discharged after multiple surgeries to save her feet. She was injured in the earthquake and had been found locked in a shed with rotting gangrenous, maggot-infested wounds. Her family could not afford medical care, and everyone was amazed she survived. One year and six surgeries later, she walked out of the Shelter (with crutches for confidence) into an awaiting vehicle which took her back to Rasuwa.



Karna, NHEDF's longest standing patient sustained a very badly broken leg in the earthquake. He will be discharged this Monday thirteen surgeries and almost two years later but will require ongoing follow up in two months as he

may require one more surgery due to osteomyelitis for which he is on long-term antibiotics. Thanks to NHEDF, his leg has been saved; he is now free of external fixators, is loving walking independently and has made lots of use of NHEDF's wonderful physio equipment. NHEDF is going to employ him as a field officer to work in the remote region he comes from.



Medical care is very complex in Nepal. It is very slow for a myriad of reasons. It is difficult for us, living in Australia, to understand how certain things happen and why things progress as they do, and how patients can end up selling all their land that has been in their family for generations, or end up \$30,000 in debt from their medical bills in one of the poorest countries in the world, but they do and we are there to pick up the pieces for people. Patients are not at NHEDF because they chose to be – they simply have no one to turn to and nowhere else to go.



**SANDEEP:** To those who responded so generously to our fundraising campaign and contributed to Sandeep's medical care, he has made steady progress, despite an infection, and has now been discharged home but will return soon for major urological surgery as the findings were more complicated than initially thought. A million thank yous for your generosity and we will keep you posted on his progress.

### FISTULA NEWS:

When our Trustee, Virginia, was in Nepal she also visited Dharan and met with members of Fistula Free Nepal. It was wonderful for her to meet everyone, visit the Fistula unit and chat to staff.



As well as helping with the rehabilitation of patients, Fistula Free Nepal has asked if we can contribute funding for ongoing medical costs for patients whose fistulas cannot be repaired by traditional surgery. As part of our fistula project, we will be supporting patients who require a Mainz procedure, where a new bladder is fashioned out of loops of bowel. This has proved to be a very successful way of treating inoperable fistula in Nepal, but patients require ongoing medical supervision for the remainder of their lives.



A huge thank you to all those who have donated to our Fistula Project and also to Days for Girls Canberra for making and donating one hundred menstrual kits of which eighty are for fistula affected women to help them deal with incontinence. In Nepal both menstrual and incontinence products are often simply not available and those that are un-affordable to women living in remote regions.

### OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER IS ON SUNDAY JULY 29<sup>TH</sup> AT THE TAJ AGRA RESTAURANT, BELCONNEN:

Please put this date in your calendar. We hope to fill the restaurant this year like we used to for Langtang Valley Health! Virginia badly needs an MC so please contact her if you are interested in reducing her stress levels on this day by taking on this small role!

**THANK YOU:** As always, we would like to say a million thanks yous to you all for your support. To those who have made donations to our projects and/or have become part of our Nurse and Physiotherapist Sponsorship Programs NHEDF's patients are so grateful for what you facilitate. We always need more

sponsors – Please visit [Sponsor the wages of a nurse or physiotherapist](#) to learn more about our sponsorship program.

Our website [www.roads-to-rehab-nepal.org](http://www.roads-to-rehab-nepal.org) and Facebook pages <https://www.facebook.com/RoadsToRehabNepal> have regular updates on the wonderful work you are doing and how you can help. We now also have a separate Facebook page for our Fistula Project <https://www.facebook.com/Roads-to-Rehab-Nepal-Fistula-Project-392238371238100>

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:** If you would like to help us in a practical way, we welcome volunteers to assist us in our many tasks!

**VISITING NEPAL?** If you are planning on visiting Nepal please take the time to visit NHEDF and you will see for yourself the amazing work they are doing. We always have items like sheets and towels, dressing products and other bits and pieces, so if you have space in your luggage please contact us!

With best wishes and grateful thanks,

*Virginia Dixon*

President, Roads to Rehab Nepal



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