



Roads to Rehab  
Nepal

## WELCOME TO OUR SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

We had a small contingent of faithful supporters plus friends at our 'Christmas in July' fundraising dinner. Despite low numbers, we managed to raise \$2,665 from the event itself including some wonderful donations from people in lieu of attendance. Our grateful thanks go to you for coming; to Trish for speaking; to Martin for MC-ing and to the Taj Agra for having us.

We held our Annual General Meeting in August and are delighted to welcome Nivedita to our Management Committee. She is the lovely friend of Samrat's who spoke so passionately at last year's fundraising dinner. Thank you Nivedita, for joining us!

Our annual report will soon be distributed to everyone on our mailing list. If you missed it or are not a subscriber visit our website <https://roads-to-rehab-nepal.org/reports>

### PATIENTS AT THE SHELTER



Since our last newsletter, all MeRO's patients with burns were discharged. Their lives have changed dramatically because they have beaten the Nepali odds of surviving burns to more than 30% of their bodies. They will continue to experience the long term consequences of inadequate burns management and over time, will return to MeRO to have their contractures released. Thanks to the informative talk by Dr Trish Bachelor, those who attended our fundraising dinner will have a much better understanding of the challenges and acute and long-term impact of burns for patients at the Shelter.

The number of patients MeRO can treat at one time depends not only on financial considerations, but patient acuity. Patient numbers were down over the last quarter, simply because of the time-consuming nature of nursing care for patients with acute burns injuries and the cost of their treatment..

Sarbendra, Manita and Jesika have been replaced with patients with expensive orthopaedic diagnoses instead!

16-year old Susan was operated on for a non-malignant tumour which also required a knee replacement. She and her mum were so happy as initially doctors thought she too had osteosarcoma. Her story is complex and we will share it with you another time.



Jauli is 53 and her story was told in the media. She began experiencing problems with her right knee at the age of 41. When she did manage to visit hospital, there were no specialist doctors available and no suitable diagnostic tests.

She was repeatedly referred to higher-level hospitals but could not afford their recommendations. Despite enduring significant pain, she decided against further hospital visits due to financial constraints. For the next six years she lived with increasing pain and disability. Eventually it all became too much and she sought treatment at a local hospital where she was given numerous pain-killing

injections. For some reason, the doctors suspected she had uterine cancer and referred her to a cancer hospital in Chitwan. Her husband took out substantial loans from their community to cover the \$2000 of medical expenses they had incurred.

Eventually she was diagnosed with osteosarcoma (bone cancer not uterine cancer) and doctors recommended surgery at an estimated cost of \$5000.

Again, her husband borrowed money from villagers, friends, and family to cover medical costs and the operation went ahead. By this time she was 47. Although she was assured that the new knee joint would last for many years, she still needed crutches to walk and was in constant pain.



Over the next six years, Jauli and her husband worked hard and managed to repay half of what they borrowed whilst taking care of their seven children. Nine months ago her implant fractured. She went to the hospital in Chitwan and was advised to undergo further surgery to replace it at a cost of over \$5000. Jauli remained in hospital hoping for compassion and some financial support, but there was none forthcoming.

Her husband was unable to raise the necessary funds. Desperate, they reached out for help and their story was told in the media. They were then connected with MeRO.

Jauli had surgery last month and was transferred back to the Shelter where she is receiving ongoing nursing care including management of the bedsores she sustained whilst in hospital in Chitwan. She is now receiving intensive physiotherapy and is hopefully dreaming of getting rid of those crutches!



Sita, Nirman and Dipshika were all discharged after release of their burns contractures and it looks like Anjeela has become Dipshika's favourite person at the Shelter looking at this photo!

Other patients this quarter have included a nice, simple surgical patient with cataracts. A previous patient, Laxmi was discharged after follow-up appointments for her vascular issues and Milan returned for further ear surgery. Asmit was discharged following treatment of kidney stones. Krishna needed spinal surgery but got scared and discharged himself the day before it was scheduled. He knows he can come back at any time should

he change his mind.

56 year-old Khina underwent investigations for cardiac surgery but she was not a good candidate for surgery so required medical management only.

19 year-old Prativa, 6 year-old Arpan, 18 month-old Rehan and 15 month-old Janisha were all discharged following cardiac surgery from which they all made excellent recoveries.

Datya returned home following two successive amputations as a result of a simple wound infection. He will come back to have his prosthesis fitted at some stage.



## STAFFING AT THE SHELTER

MeRO has lost yet another nurse to overseas. Sushmita recently resigned having been granted a visa for Canada. In consultation with staff, MeRO decided not to replace her and instead give Kusum, Sony and new nurse Nayna (who recently replaced Usha) a much needed pay rise.

People in Nepal are facing increased cost of living pressures just like we are here and we were more than happy to support this decision. Welcome Nayna and we wish you all the best, Sushmita.



Inflation in Nepal is significant. The Asian Development Bank deemed consumer price inflation in Nepal averaged 6.4% over the ten years to 2022. The average figure for 2023 was 7.7% and the target inflation rate for this financial year is 6.5%.

We really appreciate the amazing continued generosity of our nurse and physio sponsors, If you would like to make an annual, fortnightly or monthly contribution to our nurse or physio sponsorship program please read the section below. All donations, no matter how small (or large!) are greatly appreciated.

### SEPTEMBER THE 8<sup>TH</sup> IS WORLD PHYSIOTHERAPY DAY!



Anjeela, MeRO's physio, will also receive a pay rise. Anjeela has been at the Shelter since the beginning and does an incredible job of improving the health outcomes for all patients at the Shelter who come under her care. Physiotherapy is such an important part of rehabilitation. You can help sponsor her wages by making an annual or regular recurring donation to our Physiotherapist sponsorship program. This can be done either through our Aussie bank account or via GlobalGiving – see below! All donations, no matter how small (or large!!) are greatly appreciated.

### GLOBALGIVING



**100% Matching**  
on new monthly donations\*

Our July Bonus Day fundraiser raised \$1257. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed. Matching funds ran out very, very early, and only \$30 was matched. Our next fundraising event will be GlobalGiving's #Giving Tuesday in November.

For the remainder of this year, **GlobalGiving will match all NEW regular recurring donations.** The purpose of this matching offer is to encourage people to commit to ongoing monthly giving, which provides nonprofit partners like us with a source of funds that we can use to better plan and budget.

*\* Terms and conditions apply* Anyone who sets up a **new monthly donation** will have their first contribution up to \$200 matched at 100%. For example, if you set up a \$25 monthly donation via GlobalGiving, they will make a one-time donation of \$25 to our project. If you would like to become a regular recurring donation the following link will take you to our project page.

<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/provide-life-changing-medical-care-in-nepal/>

MeRO's annual registration was renewed with the Social Welfare Council who have made some changes around how funds are sent. Since Riten Rai, a committee member, passed away from COVID-19, the administrative burden on Samrat has increased steadily. This, combined with new SWC regulations have prompted MeRO to employ someone to assist him. We would like to introduce Onchhu Sherpa who has almost completed a Bachelor in Business. He has taken on the role of what we could call 'Practice Manager' at the Shelter. Welcome Onchhu!

Virginia and Paul are looking forward to visiting Nepal in November and spending time at the Shelter. Any requests for next years fundraising dinner auction items let us know!

### THANK YOU'S

As always, we cannot thank you enough for your generosity and ongoing support. Any questions contact us via our website [www.roads-to-rehab-nepal.org](http://www.roads-to-rehab-nepal.org)

With best wishes and grateful thanks,

*Virginia Dixon*

President, Roads to Rehab Nepal

