



SWINFEN CHARITABLE TRUST

Newsletter

Issue No. 4
Spring 2004

Registered Charity Number 1077879
Spring 2004

Saving lives with telemedicine

Linking the remotest regions of the earth with the world's finest medical minds

EDITORIAL

It was a pleasure to note that Valerie Taylor OBE, the founder of the Centre for Rehabilitation of the paralysed, Dhaka, Bangladesh was among the group of women being honoured by HM the Queen at a recent lunch at Buckingham Palace. Valerie was a great help to the Swinfens in the early stages of development of the Trust's system and her vision and trust was of enormous help.

Four new links have been established in Iraq since the turn of the year. Yet another first for the Trust and a milestone in our development.

A further three links have also been established in East Timor, Cambodia and Zambia.

Numerous applications for further links, including more in Iraq, are in the pipeline awaiting approval and funding.

CONFERENCE IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Roger and Pat Swinfen were invited by the Iraq Liaison Group (ILG) of The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to participate in a joint meeting with Iraqi Gynaecologists in Amman, Jordan recently. The meeting was facilitated by the Jordanian RCOG Representative Committee and sponsored by The British Council and The United Nations' Family Planning Association (UNFPA). This was the first meeting of the Iraqi specialist O & G doctors since the end of the recent conflict.

The last meeting of this sort took place over twenty years ago and heralded the re-establishment of close working relations between the RCOG and its Iraqi Members/Fellows aimed at promoting improvements in maternal health.

The meeting was attended by over thirty gynaecological specialists from Iraq and a number from UK, the President of the RCOG Professor Bill Dunlop and Roger and Pat from The Swinfen Charitable Trust. During the meeting, the Swinfens made a power-point presentation on Telemedicine and its value in developing countries.

Khartoum Cheshire Home

A two month old child was found to have a severe grade of cleft palate. He had difficulty in being fed, was malnourished as a result and only vaguely conscious on admission.

Alternative feeding suggestions were required until the child could undergo surgery. Advice was sought through the Trust, the advice was found to be helpful and the clinical management changed as a result. The child has now left hospital.

REGIONAL UP-DATE

Iraq



Four sets of SCT equipment were presented to Iraqi Doctors attending the RCOG Conference in Amman for

use in the following hospitals:

Al-Yarmouk Hospital, Baghdad
Basrah Teaching Hospital, Basrah
Azadi Teaching Hospital, Dohuk
Rizgray Teaching Hospital, Erbil

The Doctors received training from Pat in the use of the equipment.

Visit to Iraq

The Swinfens had a very successful visit to southern Iraq, staying at BMH



Shaibah for 6 days in company with the MOET team (Management of Obstetric Emergencies and Trauma.) from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. The team of 9 trained 16 Iraqi doctors and nurse/midwives from various hospitals in and around Basrah, and we (Roger and Pat) introduced them to Telemedicine. Thus combining training for emergencies and SCT long-term support.

SCT donated 4 sets of Telemedicine equipment for use in Basrah Maternity Hospital, The Port Hospital, Al-Zubair Hospital and a second hospital (Al-Khadimya) in Baghdad. These were presented to Dr. Raad, Director General of Health in Basrah Governate.

Aims of the Trust

To assist poor, sick and disabled people in the developing world by establishing Telemedicine links between hospitals in remote places and medical specialists around the globe

Khabul

Following the successful installation of equipment early in the New Year in Malalei Hospital, the link has already been used successfully for referrals.

Tashkent

Some difficulties in communication via the ISP, but further expansion in Uzbekistan with the first Emergency Centre being included in the SCT Telemedicine links.

Zambia

Tony Ma raised all the funds necessary to equip a link at St Francis Hospital, Katate whilst a student at the University of Western Australia. He received training in the equipment from Pat Swinfen prior to delivering it to the hospital in January. Following initial difficulties in communication via poor telephone links have not helped in establishing the link, but now these have been resolved, full use of the equipment is being made.

Cambodia

Dr Vuthy at the National Paediatric Hospital, Phnom Penh, taken with the digital camera supplied by SCT for the new telemedical link.



The equipment was transported by Professor Wootton who carried out training on the equipment at the hospital.

Dili, East Timor

Prof Wootton at the Centre for OnLine Health kindly delivered recently a set of equipment to the Bairo Pite Clinic run by Dr Dan Murphy. Dr Dan is already sending e-mail referrals to SCT. An enquiry has also been made by a consultant working with Dili General Hospital so perhaps SCT will be able to help there too.

Teledermatology in Queensland

The Centre for OnLine Health at the University of Queensland is currently offering a teledermatology service to General Practitioners in rural and remote Queensland. The project is a government-funded initiative designed to provide GPs in rural and remote Queensland with diagnostic and treatment advice for skin conditions via email, i.e. it has many similarities with the service provided globally by the Swinfen Charitable Trust.

The teledermatology service, which is offered free of charge to Queensland GPs, is being trialled for twelve months. The primary aim of the work is to demonstrate that specialised dermatological expertise can be delivered to rural and remote areas via email, thus saving patients unnecessary travel for treatment.

To date, 10 digital cameras have been delivered to GPs located in the Mackay region, about 1100 km north of Brisbane, on Queensland's Central Coast. Each GP has been given some basic training in taking clinical photographs. In the first five months of operation, there were 48 referrals to the service. The quality of digital images forwarded to Brisbane for diagnostic and treatment advice has

been reasonably high, see Fig 1. As with most telemedicine work, the main problems have been due to human factors, rather than technical. GP satisfaction with the service has been high. On the basis of these outcomes, the service is now being expanded to include more remote GPs operating further inland.



Fig 1. Young male patient with occupation involving wet work. Dermatologist suggested twice daily bathing in dilute condys solution(light pink colour) followed by the application of Kenacomb ointment.



The Swinfen Charitable Trust together with the Centre for OnLine Health, have developed a secure system for patient notes, accessible via the web by both primary health clinics and hospitals, to be piloted around Basra, Southern Iraq.

DONATIONS

The Trust is grateful for the continuing financial support that it receives, but funds are still a key issue in the development of the Trust's work and the need to support an ever increasing number of crucial links to those in need.

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Summer 2004

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RECEPTION IN LONDON

Congratulations. In reaching its fifth year of operation, a significant milestone for the trust was achieved.

To mark this auspicious occasion, a Reception was held on 24 June 2004 in the River Room, The House of Lords by kind permission of The Lord Chancellor. Around eighty eminent Consultants, Doctors, friends of the Trust and Members of Parliament attended. Also present was HE The High Commissioner for Australia, Mr Michael L'Estrange.

In his short address, The Lord Swinfen thanked everyone for coming to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary and to update them on the work of the Trust.

In a reply to the address, Dr Raymond Crawford, a retired GP who spent eighteen months at Ghorahi Hospital in Nepal, told everyone how vital the links were to remote hospitals and how much Doctors relied on the ability to make immediate contact with Consultants.

Link with Mercy Ships

We heard recently that The Trust was able to provide valuable advice to Mercy Ships. MV Anastasia was in harbour in Freetown, Sierra Leone and requested Real Time advice on a pathological diagnosis that would allow an operation to be performed on a patient on the operating table. The Trust was able to help by providing the email address of Dr Ivar Nordrum, the foremost exponent on remote diagnosis of that sort.

EDITORIAL

The Reception held in London recently was judged to be a success and it was pleasing to see many well-known faces, particularly those who had made long journeys from overseas especially to be at the Reception. It was good to be able to welcome Lt Col Cain from BMH Shaibah, who had been so helpful to the Swinfens on their recent visit to Iraq. Among others present were Valerie Taylor OBE, Founder of CRP Bangladesh, Ann Clwyd MP, Virginia Bottomley MP, Prof Richard Wootton, Centre for OnLine Health, Dr Victor Patterson, consultant neurologist, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast and Mr Stephen Wood, consultant in orthopaedics, World Orthopaedic Concern.

REGIONAL UPDATE

The Trust continues to expand its links with over 35 now in place, including more than 9 in Iraq alone. There are many more in the pipeline.

As a result of this, the number of referrals is increasing dramatically with a total of 40 or so in the month of June alone.

ACADEMIA

The Swinfens have recently been re-appointed as Honorary Research Fellows at the Centre for OnLine Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Queensland. Apart from the honour of this, it is unusual for a re-appointment and reflects a most respectable record of research in terms of eight papers in the last three years.

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The fourth **Annual Successes and Failures Telemedicine Conference** took place in Brisbane, Queensland on 22 and 23 July 2004. A presentation on “Prospective case review of a global e-health system for doctors in developing countries” was given by Pat Swinfen, Georgina Liley and Karen Youngberry.

A similar presentation was given at the **Health Informatics Conference** in Brisbane two days later.

Pat and Georgina then moved on to the **University of Western Australia**, Perth and gave a presentation on the work of the Swinfen Charitable Trust to Prof Geoff Riley, Prof David Forbes, Prof Yogesan and other medical colleagues.

Ambitions and Funding

The tables show the likely build up of new links over the next three years and the funding requirements needed to service that demand. This is a difficult challenge but one that must be met in order to continue the vital work of the Trust.

The links are now approaching 40 and it seems likely that the figure of 50 is a realistic forecast for April next year.

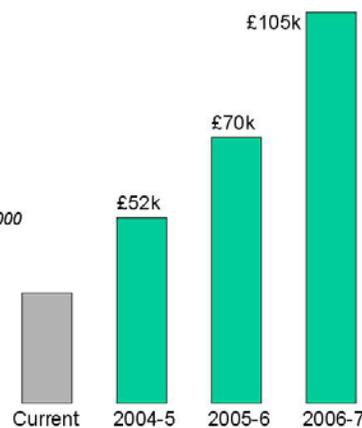
Donations

Anyone who is reading this Newsletter is urged to make a donation and perhaps support on a continuing basis. These can be made by cheque to Swinfen Charitable Trust, FREEPOST NAT 18663, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1BR



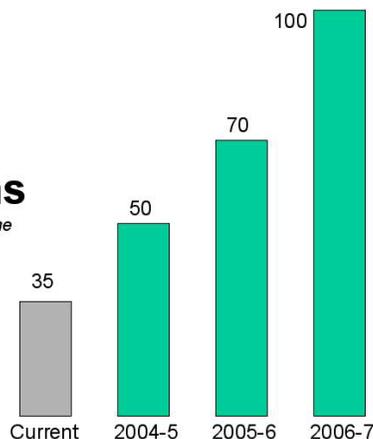
Funding

Required levels at £3,000 per link set up



Ambitions

Number of Telemedicine links established



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