



McFarlane News

July 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

A Paradigm Shift

Often we don't get to see the results of what we teach. We just have to trust that what we have done will be effective when the students start to work in their own villages and clinics. Most the patients present to the clinic at Loi Tai Leng with acute conditions, that are treated and the patient discharged recovered and back to normal. But patients also present with conditions from which they not recover completely, and which will leave them with long term disability.

In response to this we decided to include a module on stroke rehabilitation into the teaching programme. Our students need to be able to function in a whole variety of roles – they have to be the physiotherapist and the occupational therapist and nurse and whatever other role is needed - because they often the only health professional in their village. As each patient that they encounter will have different issues and needs, we taught this module based



around some basic rehabilitation principles and problem solving, rather than teaching specific solutions.

You can imagine our emotions the next day when we walked into the men's ward for a ward round to find that overnight they had built a set of rails – out of bamboo, wood and tyre inner tube - for the young man who was lying in bed after a stroke. He was keen and enthusiastic and quickly up and practicing walking. He was shaky and unsteady at first, but after a week of hours of practice his balance and co-ordination were improving, and he was much more confident and stable.

Another patient nearby who has lost most of the power in both legs was watching and all of a sudden was working on standing and sitting. Rehabilitation had become infectious.

These simple changes represent a paradigm shift in the medics thinking, changing from a present and acute focus of care – dealing with acute illness and recovery, to a future and chronic disease focus where the goal is the restoration of function.



Family News

Challenges and milestones for our family

Page 2



Teaching

Find out how our teaching program is going.

Page 2/3

Family News

"Before they call I will answer and while they are still speaking I will hear". Isaiah 65:24

In April we were up in Loi Tai Leng teaching. We had been out for a walk and just heading down the last hill when we spotted Dave Eubank and his wife and kids walking towards the clinic ahead of us. Dave is from Free Burma Rangers, which is another mission concerned with helping displaced people in Burma. We were hurrying to catch up with him when I heard my phone beep with an incoming text. We chatted to Dave and Karen on the clinic verandah for a while talking about our work and also about those things that might cause us to change what we are doing and go back to NZ. Family issues were one such thing that we talked about and Dave and Karen prayed with us there and then about it, asking for God's protection for our family. We parted and headed back to the house, and then I looked at my phone. The text was from Ross – our eldest son – asking if we could Skype. We can get texts and make phone calls now from Loi Tai Leng but Skype is not possible yet. So a text conversation followed, and we found



that Ross had discovered a lump where it shouldn't be and had an ultrasound scan booked. A couple of days later the scan was done, and his GP had referred him to a specialist. Ross emailed the scan report to us – and when we read it we could see that there were things of serious concern, and decided that one of us needed to get back to NZ to be with he and Chantelle. I was able to sit on the deck of our house and make the bookings using the internet. It was intermittent and slow, but just a few months previously it might have taken a week or more before we would have even

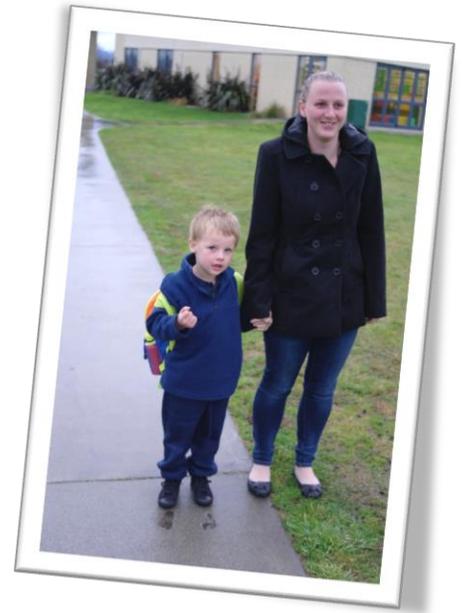
known that there was any problem at all, and there was certainly had no consistent way of communicating.

Ross has been diagnosed with a cancer that has an excellent outlook with treatment. He has completed and a cycle of chemotherapy. Now it is a matter

of watching to ensure it doesn't come back.

God certainly went ahead of us though the prayers of the Eubanks and we know that although there are challenges, He is protecting our children.

Starting School



In June and July we had two special and linked events. Our little grandson Joel had his fifth birthday and a few weeks later started school at Sunrise Christian School. This is the school we had a part in starting so it was very special for us to have a second generation from our family attending the school

Teaching



Alison modelling a consultation with a "mother" – Simon – one of the other teachers – dressed up.

Teaching is why we are here, and it's going so well.

We make changes all the time which add to the quality—for instance I made some curtains with Burmese elephants on them, to use as blackout curtains while we are showing videos. They work just great. It was a mission working out a system to attach them to the windows as the walls are rough cement plaster and don't hold the weight of curtain rods. Just sticking up posters is a mission too as nothing

sticks and you can't use drawing pins! Haven't solved that one yet!

This class seems to be very good at small group work so we are focussing on that and have decided to spend some time each week just practicing physical exam. The only problem is the class is mostly girls and the 3 males always get used as models for the exam—so they don't get to practice exam themselves.... Ah, 3rd world problems...

Last year we discovered by accident that 2 or 3 of the students had quite major health issues. This year we decided to consult with and examine all the students—we are investing a lot in them so it's good to know they are healthy. Many needed glasses and we bought the standard type glasses in a little stall in Chiang Mai—cleaned out her stock basically, the shopkeeper was just thrilled!!

Also many were not up to date with vaccines so we will get on to that now that we are back. We were able to use one of the students, Hseng Twe, for translating. She is the person that the others come to for health problems and advice so it was good to see her using her skills and know that this is very good practice for her medic training.

We have a quiz each week, and they are doing very well, 3 or 4 competing strongly for top marks and the others all good, no-one failing. Setting and marking the quiz is a real art—first making sure that we are examining what we need to examine and not just their grasp of English - that's an issue even with translation. Then deciphering odd responses, trying to figure out if it's what we are wanting, but maybe said in a different way.

And we learn too... one thing that has changed my thinking is that formal English Medicalspeak refers to the sounds the heart makes as "heart sounds" but the Shan words translate as "heart-song"! The rhythmic lub-dup sound that you hear with a stethoscope is exactly a song! So we call them "heart song" now - maybe it will go viral!!

