

Nepal Thalassaemia Society – appeal

Dear friends

*When we heard the news of the appalling tragedy in Nepal we had just been about to publish an update from our old friend Wendy Pinker, who works with the thalassaemia children of Nepal. Sadly the happy news of Wendy's recent visit to the thalassaemia clinic to bring gifts and essential supplies for all the children has been overtaken by the dreadful news of the earthquake and the devastation it has caused to the already desperately poor people of Nepal. Wendy herself had only been back in the UK for a few days when the earthquake struck on 25th April 2015. Since then she has been trying to raise funds to help the Nepal Thalassaemia Society so that they can provide assistance to vulnerable families affected by thalassaemia. UKTS circulated the appeal below and many of our members have responded in heartwarming fashion. A huge **THANK YOU** to all those who have already donated – we will be sending round bulletins by email and in the next issue of TM to keep you informed of how your donations are being used to help the thalassaemia children of Nepal.*

Appeal

We have all seen the news about the devastating earthquake in Nepal. There are many charity appeals going on at the moment and they are all worthwhile. However there is one charity very close to home and close to our hearts and

that is the Nepal Thalassaemia Society. Long-standing UKTS members will be familiar with the story of NTS and how it was founded by a British woman, Wendy Pinker, living in Nepal. This lady, who is not a healthcare professional and has no personal connection with thalassaemia, has single-handedly raised enough money to not only open a thalassaemia transfusion clinic in Kathmandu, but to keep it open and running since 2009. The clinic provides free transfusions for over 120 very poor children on a fortnightly basis.

The clinic building has miraculously survived the earthquake, but may need some structural work. However many of the thalassaemia children (who travel many hours to Kathmandu for their transfusions) live in the epicentre of the earthquake and have lost their homes, some are spending the freezing nights in the open, some are in tents or meagre shelters and many are in very remote areas. They are in desperate need of our help. They also urgently need blood and medical supplies.

Many of us want to donate money to help the earthquake victims; but by donating to the Nepal Thalassaemia Society we can make sure that our donations are going directly to help families affected by thalassaemia. The relief efforts are being coordinated by Wendy Pinker in the UK and Durga Pathak, the President of NTS, in Nepal. Please, if you have a spare couple of pounds, consider sending them to NTS for the benefit of the children – a very little money goes a long way in Nepal and you can be sure that your donations are going directly to those in need in our own "thalassaemia family".

EVERY SINGLE PENNY DONATED WILL GO DIRECTLY TO NEPAL THALASSAEMIA SOCIETY

Bank details

Nepal Thalassaemia Society
Account No : 71463209
Sort Code : 40 47 34

Email : pinkyland_2000@yahoo.co.uk

Address for cheques: Wendy Pinker, 13 Phoenix Way, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7FG



Some of the children having their transfusions in the open air after the earthquake (in case of aftershocks).

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Wendy with Harimaya Upreti, who was the first thalassaemic child she met in Nepal. Harimaya's two older sisters both sadly died of thalassaemia without ever having received a diagnosis or treatment. Wendy was volunteering at the school in the town of Pokhara when she met this frail little girl who seemed to be wasting away. She was told by the local people that the children of this family got weaker and weaker and no-one understood why. Wendy took Harimaya to Kathmandu (a 9-hour bus

journey) where she was told the little girl had thalassaemia and that she would inevitably die. So began Wendy's amazing quest to learn more about thalassaemia and its treatment.

Sadly Harimaya and her parents are currently homeless as their modest home and all their possessions were completely destroyed by the earthquake. Their only form of shelter is a half-collapsed animal shed which they share with their buffalo.

Update from Nepal by Wendy Pinker

Some of the Nepali families have more than one child with thalassaemia....



Sarasuti and Niru are two sisters who come from a very poor family. Their father is a porter and earns just 500rs (£4.00) per day... he works 14 hour days and is often away from home for weeks at a time leaving his wife to manage the girls' treatment. Having free treatment at the clinic is a massive help to them but even just paying for the journey there is a strain and many times the girls have to miss their transfusion so their parents can put rice on the table. We would very much like to be able to offer the girls and their parents some extra help so that they never have to miss their life saving treatment.



Sunil and Anil Rai are brothers from Chitwan 8 hours from our clinic in Kathmandu. Their father is a simple farmer but has no land of his own, he is a labourer and earns just 300 (£2.50) per day. Sunil and Anil have now had to leave their family home to live with their aunty and uncle in Kathmandu to be near the clinic. It is heart breaking for both the children and their parents as they can only come together as a family at festival times. We would desperately like to be able to offer some help for transport costs so that the family could be together where they belong.



Kamal is the oldest Thalassaemic in Nepal at 34 years old. He walked through our gates on Christmas day 3 years ago having travelled over 600km for 3 days in a leap of faith that he might be able to get help in Kathmandu. He is now the secretary at the clinic and is having regular transfusions. Kamal has some financial help with his transportation from a lovely lady called Jill in the UK; but he is now urgently in need of regular chelation treatment... as it's clear to see Kamal is very poorly but his spirit is strong and I know that with proper chelation treatment Kamal's health could be much improved.... It is my mission this year to try and secure the cost of his treatment for him.