

CRP helps support Rohingya Refugees

Since August 2017, nearly 700,000 Rohingya refugees have fled Myanmar for camps in Bangladesh. A.K. Khan-CRP Chittagong is working in the Rohingya refugee camps in collaboration with several other NGOs. A recent survey of nearly 90,000 refugees completed by CRP identified 320 people who required rehabilitation services or assisted devices such as wheelchairs, prosthetics or walking aids. As this was just a small sample, the number of people requiring these services is likely to be much greater. CRP is working with other NGOs in the area, particularly Handicap International, to meet these needs as best as possible. The areas where the Rohingya refugee camps are based are very hilly and CRP has developed a one-wheeler wheelchair that is able to handle the hilly terrain much better than a standard chair. They are working with Handicap International to distribute this.

The refugee crisis in the area is unprecedented and has put immense strain on Bangladesh's resources across the board. As well as the

immediate needs for food and shelter and the physical disabilities identified, the trauma of seeing their villages burned and relatives rounded up for execution will surely have left many of the refugees with long-term mental health issues. In the face of such immense challenges, clearly CRP can't do everything, but for as long as the need remains, CRP will work hard to help support those who need their input. Meanwhile it is up to us to lobby the UK Government to provide a fair share of the international assistance needed to help Bangladesh provide for the refugees.



Trialling the new wheelchair design

Chairman's Notes

The work of CRP continues to flourish with the most recent development being a capability to treat those with Mental Health difficulties. Here in the UK fundraising continues and over £1.7M has been sent to CRP since 2008. This is a remarkable effort – thanks to all those who have contributed in so many ways. Please do read the articles about Data Protection Regulations and Safeguarding Policies and how VTT is complying with the respective requirements. Both are important areas of our business.

Early this year Nick Lack, our Secretary for several years, died after a long illness. He had worked with the British Council and said that his time in Bangladesh was his favourite posting. He will be greatly missed.

VTT Trustees are all volunteers and balance their business and personal lives with their VTT work. Stuart Jeffreys has now served as Treasurer for 3 years and wishes to stand down to make time for his other commitments. We urgently need a new Treasurer – are you that person or do you know someone who would be able to carry out this role? If so please do get in touch with a Trustee or our Administrator.

On a similar note I will be standing down this year after 10 years as Chairman. It has been a very fulfilling time. My thanks and appreciation go to all of our Members and Supporters who have done so much to help give those in need a better life.

Bertie Woolnough CBE
Chairman, Valerie Taylor Trust

Mental Health Day Centre Opens

At last year's Annual Supporters' meeting in May Valerie spoke amongst other things about Mental Health provision in Bangladesh. Mental health problems are now one of the main causes of the overall disease burden worldwide, and with current studies showing that poverty and natural disasters increase the prevalence, it is becoming a growing concern in Bangladesh.



Karen and other staff at the launching workshop

Occupational Therapy (OT) as a profession has its foundations in mental health and CRP trained OTs are a valuable resource for Mental Health patients. Unfortunately, in Bangladesh there are limited opportunities for OTs to work in Mental Health and posts that do exist, for example at the National Institute for Mental Health and the Pabna Psychiatric Hospital, are often not occupied by OT's. However in the past 4 years this has been slowly changing.

The Kadoorie Charitable Foundation has agreed to fund a day centre for people with mental health needs for the next 3 years. The centre, which opened on the 1st March 2018 will be based at CRP Gonokbari and staffed by OTs from CRP.

The day centre will be the first of its kind in Bangladesh and will focus on users feeling less stigmatized and more empowered with a focus

on community integration. The day centre will give service users a safe platform to develop and learn daily living skills that they may have lost due to illness or a stay in hospital. This would then in turn enable a smoother transition into community living and engagement in meaningful life.

The bus has been purchased which will transport the service users from Dhaka and back each day. It is hoped that by basing the day centre at CRP Gonokbari, the location will also provide opportunities for service users to explore different types of meaningful occupation through vocational training. There will also be an emphasis on carer/family support and education, empowering them to become advocates for change in mental health within their own communities, and thus tackling the stigma surrounding mental health.

Following discharge from the day centre service users will be followed up by the OTs and if needed, a Community Based Rehabilitation Team. This will allow a phased discharge with a focus on preventing readmission.

Karen Heaslip, a volunteer Occupational Therapist from Ireland arrived on 28th February, 2018 and will spend 3 weeks helping in the initial work, along with the other OTs.

A successful launching workshop was held on the 15th March with encouraging feedback from all guests.

Looking at all this from the UK, it's easy to be discouraged by the sheer scale of the problem facing Bangladesh. However it is felt this day centre is the best way to start to tackle the enormous task of rehabilitating people suffering with mental health difficulties in the country. CRP is very excited about this new venture.

Important Information from VTT's Administrator:

Safeguarding – Vulnerable Children and Adults

The Charity Commission has stated that VTT is required to carry out 'due diligence' on the Safeguarding Policies in place at CRP. We do not need to have our own Safeguarding Policy as VTT is not in direct contact with staff and patients at CRP. It has been confirmed that CRP has a TRP agreed policy in place for children but not for adults. It has been agreed with CRP that their current policy will be now be revised to include adults at risk. VTT will be required to report annually to the Charity Commission that this due diligence has been carried out. This year's report will state the current position at CRP and note that work is in progress to expand the policy to include adults.

Summary of VTT Privacy Policy – General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR)

On 25th May, 2018, new data protection regulations governing the use of Personal Data will be introduced and will require charities to meet the necessary requirements. VTT Trustees are jointly responsible for the administration and governance of any Personal Data held by VTT. Personal Data is any information that will enable the individual to be identified, eg. Names and addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, and bank account details (these are only held for

administering standing orders). VTT uses the data to monitor membership and donors and payments, to correspond and circulate information and newsletters, and to advise of meetings and events. Personal Data will not be passed to any other organisation or commercial undertaking without your consent, except for HMRC in relation to claims made under the Gift Aid Scheme or, as requested, to CRP, as the recipient organisation of VTT funds, for the circulation of information and calendars from them. On occasions, data may be required to be released by law.

By providing your Personal Data to VTT, we acknowledge your agreement to use the items of data as indicated to monitor your membership, donations, to correspond with you and circulate information and newsletters, and to advise you of meetings and events. Donors can update their contact preferences or withdraw consent for any of the uses specified, at any time by contacting, in writing, the Administrator, Valerie Taylor Trust, 4, Wilberforce Road, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4HA or email: admin@valerietaylortrust.org.

Your request will be recorded. You may also obtain a copy of the information we hold and how it is used by applying in writing to the above address. The full Privacy Statement may be seen on our website – www.valerietaylortrust.org and if required, a paper copy of the Privacy Policy may be obtained from The Administrator at the above address.

Vocational Training Institute offers more than just employment

CRP's Vocational Training Unit (VTI) plays an essential role in supporting people with disabilities find or return to employment. Katherine Murphy reports on how her research project demonstrated its benefits can be even further reaching.



A trainee practices on a linking machine

I had the opportunity to spend eight weeks at CRP doing research for my dissertation in the spring of 2017. Through the University of Edinburgh's partnership with CRP I was given the chance to conduct my research in Bangladesh, evaluating the employment outcomes of CRP's VTI. I worked with the Research and Evaluation Department to design and carry out my project. Most of my time was spent conducting interviews with VTI staff members and individuals who had completed one of the training courses in order to evaluate the impact of the VTI on the lives of participants.

People with disabilities tend to suffer higher unemployment rates than their peers without disabilities. CRP's VTI meets a critical need in Bangladesh for vocational training courses specifically designed for people with disabilities. Vocational training promotes skill development and improves employability by giving people with disabilities the opportunity to relearn skills or learn new skills that will allow them to become employed. While there are some vocational training centres in Bangladesh, they are not tailored to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

The VTI was established in 1999 and currently offers vocational training courses at five CRP

locations. The courses offered through the VTI are free of cost and prepare trainees to work in one of six trades: IT, electronics repair, dress making and tailoring, shop management, linking machine operation and sewing machine operation. Participants can also learn bee keeping and/or mushroom cultivation to supplement their income.

As I began conducting interviews, it quickly became clear that the VTI has had a huge impact on both VTI staff members and course participants alike. All of the staff members I interviewed spoke passionately about the importance of vocational training and the positive effect that the training courses had on the lives of participants. When speaking with individuals who had completed a course, I heard many stories about the impact that the course and employment had on their lives. In addition to the financial benefits, some participants described feeling more confident in their abilities, others expressed that they received more respect from their peers in their communities.

Many of the participants used what they learned in training to become self-employed, opening up electronics repair shops or snack shops. Others, who had been trained in sewing



Kat relaxing with Shamoly, the housekeeper

or linking, found jobs at factories. Of course, not all participants succeeded in finding employment after completing a course. However, even the individuals I interviewed that were unemployed spoke very highly of CRP and their experiences at the VTI.

When I wasn't working on my research, I had the chance to get to know patients and CRP

staff in other departments by participating in the daily activities during my free time. Whether it was being invited to iftar during Ramadan, practicing my Bangla or playing cards in the main hall, there was always something to take part in. The CRP community was incredibly welcoming and I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to volunteer there.

Theatre Improvement Project moving forward

Roger and Jan Varney are continuing their focus on the improvement and updating of the Operating Theatres at CRP Savar.

They have recently returned from NATO in Brussels where they received a cheque for €8,878.80 which has been used to pay for the laying of new specialist flooring (PolyFlor) in the 2 Operating Theatres and the MRI room. Through the generosity of CRP this flooring has also been laid in the main corridor bringing the main Operating Theatre area up to the acceptable 21st century requirements. This will provide the foundation for the provision of updated equipment. The Rotary Clubs of St Austell Bay and Gulshan in Dhaka are progressing well with raising the \$85,000 needed for this and it is anticipated the work will be completed this year. This is only the first stage in equipping the Theatres. A C-arm,



Roger and Jan with the cheque from NATO

Anaesthetic Machine and replacement Positive Air Control system needs to be provided at the cost of \$300,000 USD.

A tribute to a colleague and a friend

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the death of one of our former Trustees Nick Lack. Nick died earlier this year after a long illness and his funeral was held in the parish church of Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey on 13th February.

Nick was born in 1948, married to Nora, and served in several countries with the British Council. He spent 5 years in Bangladesh – and said that that was the country he enjoyed the most.

Nick became Secretary of VTT in 2013 and stood down at the end of 2016. He was passionate about the work of CRP and was thorough and dedicated in his Trustee role.

Michael Woodley, a previous VTT Trustee and long-time friend of Nick, together with Bertie Woolnough and Ben Clackson attended the funeral.

Thank you Nick for all that you did for VTT.

Masters Program strengthens intra-professional working

The Bangladesh Health Professions Institute is highly respected in South East Asia and has become a popular place to study, particularly for those looking to improve their rehabilitation knowledge.

The BHPI offers an inter-professional Masters Programme in Rehabilitation Science (MRS). This year 18 international students from countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan came to the BHPI to study alongside their Bangladeshi counterparts. Additionally, this course allows students from different health care professions to study together.

In 2017 work was completed on an International Hostel, on the grounds of CRP Savar. This hostel provides international students with a modern place to live and study, further adding to the appeal of CRP's Masters programmes.

Both the MRS and the International Hostel are South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) funded.

Dorine van Ravensberg PhD is a Human Movement Scientist, living in the Netherlands. She tells of her role on the Masters Program and the interesting research the course is producing.

About 2 months a year I teach methodology and advise students and staff about their patient-related thesis research. Very interestingly, I also learn a lot myself, with respect to the challenges and differences in way of life and the physical and social environment of disabled persons in those countries. I love to be there, in that wonderful positive and cheerful society at CRP,



International Hostel opening ceremony – Valerie Taylor with Mr. Motiwal, CEO of the SAARC development fund and Dorine van Ravensberg (far right)



notwithstanding all pain, disability and societal challenges that people have to cope with.

The MRS staff have already started important research and development projects, based on results of MRS students' theses. For example

- Research into the impact of MRS studies on CRP treatment programs and outcomes.
- Development of an evidence based exercise and educational program to treat unnecessary female urine incontinence.
- Development of a video to emphasize importance of therapy adherence in the Ponseti clubfoot program

Personally, I like the latter development project most. In the video a man will be followed in his home, while doing his work as a day-labourer. The man has one untreated clubfoot and is the father of a 2 months old girl with bilateral clubfeet. The girl is enrolled in the long-lasting treatment process that can correct the deformity. That process will be followed with explanations and advice from health care professionals. This video can be used to improve compliance with the program therefore improving outcomes for children with the condition. Additionally the video recordings will be made by a woman with disabilities. I like that it is such an inclusive project. Full inclusion of disabled persons in all aspects of the society: that is what Valerie so strongly stands for.

So, if you think that you also can make a contribution to the Master program or to other aspects of life and rehabilitation at CRP: please make contact with CRP. You will not regret it, I am sure.

Gait harness improves therapy for a variety of patients

A physiotherapy gait harness is a common assistive device, used to allow safe and early walking practice in a variety of patient groups from toddlers with cerebral palsy to adults following strokes or head injuries. A joint venture between the Physiotherapy and Special Seating Departments has resulted in the development of a gait harness to be used at CRP. This harness is an affordable device manufactured by CRP's workshop using local materials and resources.

The harness system enables physiotherapists to challenge their patients while walking and also keeps them safe. From a teaching perspective, the harness gives clinical instructors another layer of confidence and allows novice therapists to safely explore treatment options. With it, a patient can move anywhere within the 20-square-foot boundary of the structure. Consequently, the device will reduce effort, both by the therapist and patient, and, of course, build confidence towards walking independently. This harness is another tool that can be used to improve outcomes for patients receiving rehabilitation at CRP.



Trying out the new harness

Improving English Skills at CRP

Volunteer Adam Page tells how a chat and a board game can be the best way to help at CRP.

I got to know of CRP at the very beginning, when Valerie's dream was becoming a reality, the fountain at the entrance was designed and built by my mother. My wife had just died and I needed an escape, so mum suggested CRP. So in early 2017, from writing an email, filling out the volunteer form, getting a visa and arriving to Bangladesh was a pain free six week process.



Everybody wins

I had no preconceived ideas or notions or plans, only that I was going there to do "English conversation". A few years previously I had spent ten months in China, so I knew if I could cope there, Bangladesh shouldn't be a problem, luckily I was right in that aspect.

I taught English classes to a variety of students, often using word searches and puzzles to encourage participation. Often the students were very shy in class, making it hard for them to learn from each other.

I soon discovered that although most of the staff knew English, there a complete lack of practice, and as they had been taught by Bangladesh natives, to be blunt some of their pronunciations were "definitely off", (Adam being diplomatic) so when I wasn't giving English classes in the school, I'd be circulating around CRP chatting. I can assure you it's a

big place with lots of nooks and crannies, with staff everywhere always having time for a quick chat to practice their English about what they were up to in their jobs.

In my four and a half months there only once was there an occasion when I heard a man complaining about "his lot" otherwise CRP thrives with positivity and good humour, everybody supporting each other but when needed, ribbing each other for missing the basketball or volleyball practice... again.

I don't know what the future holds for CRP but I do know from being there, how vital the support and fund raising is. Also it's not just about money, I took with me my Backgammon set and near enough every night I was in the hall introducing patients and staff to the game, it was a great success. If you have chess sets, dominos or even backgammon which you've grown out of, CRP is one place I know all those games would be greatly appreciated, besides a cheque.

CRP based research could prove vital to improving healthcare

Volunteer physiotherapist Rieke Hayes reports:

I don't think you can truly appreciate the importance of CRP's existence in Bangladesh without seeing the public healthcare at work. Rehabilitation for all intents and purposes does not exist in Bangladesh, never mind re-integration into society.

My main role while at CRP was to lecture on the Masters of Physiotherapy programme at the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute (BHPI), teaching on the Evidence Based Practice and disability, community-based rehabilitation and disaster management modules. There was a certain irony to an Irish person lecturing Bangladeshi students on cyclones, floods, and earthquakes. Most students were CRP physiotherapists and the course was aimed at broadening their knowledge

and awareness of issues surrounding disability globally and promoting the use of evidence based practice at work by questioning their current practice and the status quo. This is vital for ensuring that the treatment provided to patients is timely, effective and efficient.

I also assisted with research while working at the BHPI.

A significant obstacle to pushing for healthcare reform is the absence of data; to demonstrate that there are issues, highlight the scope of these, show how investment into prevention is financially worthwhile to the government, and why the provision of rehabilitation is essential and should be accessible to all. What are the main causes for spinal cord injury/stroke in Bangladesh? Were they preventable? How many weeks or months had passed and how many facilities did



Having fun with a patient

these people even see before attending the only rehabilitation facility in Bangladesh? How were they transported to their first medical establishment? Did their doctor even advise rehabilitation or was it word of mouth, as is often the case, that brought them to CRP? The answers and truth behind these are often eye-opening and shocking but they highlight that the issue is not only the concern and responsibility of CRP, but for the nation. At BHPI, the relentless enthusiastic Firoz Mamin, coordinator for the MSc Physiotherapy programme, is leading this research, collecting admission data, demographics, patient's journeys, and attitudes to health and safety at work. This data could one day be the catalyst that revolutionises the country's healthcare, from acute care response to rehab and re-integration to society.

I came to CRP in May 2017 not quite sure what to expect but knowing that I was in good hands. It is well worth



Physiotherapy exercises

mentioning to any prospective volunteers – CRP not only appreciates its volunteers, it takes good care of them. Everything, from my collection at the airport by a welcome smile from Salim, a CRP driver, the daily meals prepared by the wonderful Shamoly, and the local trips and cultural events made me feel folded into the arms of the CRP family.

When I left in December, I left a different person. We are so utterly privileged to live in a country with universal health coverage, with the NHS. We should never take that for granted. I don't think the people of Bangladesh are lucky to have the CRP, I think it's a great shame that a non-governmental organisation like CRP needed to be formed to provide basic healthcare. But a Bangladesh without the CRP would be a sorry state indeed.

Wheelchair lift increases independence for bus users

In May 2017 CRP celebrated owning its first bus with a wheelchair lift, allowing wheelchair users to enter and exit the bus independently. The lift was donated by the International Committee of the Red Cross in 2016 but due to the rarity of this technology in Bangladesh it took a number of months to find a company who was able to install the lift. As well as increasing wheelchair users' independence, the lift will also save time and decrease the workload of carers and staff.



The wheelchair lift in use

10 students graduate from new P+O Diploma course

At the end of January 2018, ten students received a Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotics from the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute.

This three-year course, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, is funded by the International Society of the Red Cross and also supported by Primark who have recently agreed to cover the cost of 3 foreign consultants for the next 3 years. This is



P+O graduates with the ISPO evaluators

essential as there are currently no teachers of this profession in Bangladesh. The course has been evaluated by the International Society of Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) and will hopefully receive international standard recognition through this process.

Of course, the long-term plan is build and develop the skills of these new graduates, so they can eventually return and teach others.

Divisional Centres Update

CRP is working to establish centres across Bangladesh to ensure its vital services are available to all those in need and to reduce the financial and social burden of travelling long distances or living away from home for extended periods. CRP has recently received land donations to establish permanent centres in Rangpur, Khulna and, after much work and campaigning, Moulvibazar. This completes the current expansion programme with the focus now turning to developing each of the centres.

CRP BAU Branch Mymensingh and CRP-Pabna Diabetic Shamity Centre in Pabna both opened last year providing out-patient and Community Based Rehabilitation. The two centres have already provided rehabilitation to nearly 2000 people.

Iskandar Shitara CRP Sylhet opened in May 2017, currently in a rental building but with plans to move to a permanent location. The centre employs 12 staff. Volunteer **Lamisha Ahmed** reports on her experience working in the newly opened centre:



Outside the centre



With the receptionist,
a previous client

In summer of 2017 I had the opportunity of visiting and working for CRP-Sylhet. I first heard of the organisation through school, as a few of my seniors had volunteered at the Savar main centre. Being a British Bengali I thought it an amazing organisation and wondered if I could get involved. I came to know there was a centre in Sylhet, near where I usually stay with my parents. I got in touch with the organisation and explained that I would like to volunteer. Mr. Kamrul the centre manager was kind enough to accept me as a member and gave me the opportunity to get involved. I also talked to a few clients about their conditions, the therapy they were receiving and how CRP was affecting their lives. The clients didn't shy

away from expressing their gratitude, especially due to the fact that there aren't currently any organisations of this scale working so actively to reduce prejudice against the disabled and paralysed. I was extremely impressed by how updated the facilities were, despite not being finished. I learned of plans for developing an area where younger children and babies could receive therapy and having a functioning gym where clients could exercise as a part of their treatment. They are also looking to expand to house inpatients, making a comfortable recovery process. All these prospects made me realise how much progress the centre was making in terms of helping their clients and changing attitude. It cannot go without saying, however, that the willingness and smiles of the staff at CRP Sylhet has enabled them to make such progress. I also learned that many were trained by CRP themselves which was amazing to see and made me realise how many people actually benefit from the organisation. During my time there I helped produce English leaflets and information notices about the centre and what they do as the Sylhet branch is still quite unknown. To conclude CRP-Sylhet whilst being relatively new, has huge growth guaranteed in the future and will contribute massively to helping remove the stigma around disabled and paralysed people in Bangladesh whilst aiding their recovery. I look forward to being involved in the future!

Victory Day Celebrations in Glasgow

The Bangladesh Association Glasgow (BAG) in recent years have been celebrating the Victory Day of the Bangladesh Liberation War. This year, on 19th December 2017 the BAG held the event in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh at the invitation of Ivan McKee MSP who did a 2 year VSO attachment in Bangladesh in the 1980s.

The event once again highlighted the struggle for independence from Pakistan and the events leading to victory. Some TV footage from that time was presented. The evening also featured a short film made by BAG of the contribution of the Bangladesh Community to the culture and occupational involvement of Scotland. The evening concluded with a lovely dance routine by the children.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

The disabled poor in Bangladesh continue to need help. The Valerie Taylor Trust supports the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed. This is the only place in the country where the paralysed are given specialist treatment – free of charge for the very poorest.

Support our work by:

- Regular donations by completing the back page of this newsletter – our preferred method.
- Donate on-line to our bank, details overleaf, or via www.valerietaylortrust.org, www.paypal.co.uk or www.justgiving.com.
- Donate by Text to TXTVTT12 £+ the amount (£1 to £10) from any UK mobile phone to 70070. You will receive confirmation of your donation which is deducted from your mobile phone without charge for the text message.
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- Use a VTT Collection Box in the home and outdoors – obtained from the Administrator.
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Account Name (usually your own name)

Account No Bank Sort Code -

To the Manager: Please pay to HSBC for the credit of **Valerie Taylor Trust**, Account Number 3122 5227, Sort Code 40-28-29. IBAN (International Banking Account Number) GB59MIDL40282931225227 the sum of

£..... starting on (date) and on the same date each **month / year**

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