

Autumn
2020

Valerie Taylor Trust

Supporting the work of Valerie Taylor in Bangladesh

From Our Chairman, Ben Clackson

Thankfully Bangladesh has fared relatively well in the pandemic, with a Death rate per 100,000 of 3 (compared with 63 in the UK). Even allowing for Bangladesh's warmer climate and younger population, and perhaps a little under-recording of Covid-19 deaths, this is an impressive outcome for a country sheltering nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees in crowded camps. And CRP has coped particularly well, as you can see from Shafiq's message to the Annual Meeting reported below and his (live) answers to questions. Valerie has chosen to stay at CRP throughout: she told me she felt that for staff to see her walking to and from her office reassured them that she had not abandoned them in this crisis.

At the same time CRP has pressed ahead with a project to build a new purpose-built Centre at Moulvibazar on land given by two brothers now in the UK. Shafiq has asked VTT to help with raising the balance of funds required: hence our new JustGiving page (see below). And to remind yourself of what a CRP Centre actually does for people, I do recommend the vivid articles by Anna Wright and Azan Haque, one of the last people to volunteer at CRP this year.

From our Treasurer – Sayadul Islam Khaled FMAAT

This is a summary of the Draft Accounts for 2019-2020. Rounding the figures to thousands (K), the Total Income of £356K comprised Donations and Subscriptions of £45k to Restricted Funds this include £42K from Walter Stock, Consul-General of Germany. £217k to the Unrestricted Fund. Of this, £168K was from legacies, £100K from John Lanzer, £5K from Jacqueline Cameron and £63K from David Newell. Gift Aid arising from donations added a further £8K. Sales of donated items (mostly cards) and fundraising events raised £1K. The rest of the Income came from four Corporate Donations. Three of them, totalling £85K, were for Restricted Funds: £79K from Primark, and £2K from Tesco. The last Corporate Donation of £4K from Robert Bion & Co Ltd was to the Unrestricted Fund. Expenditure was £2,626 only 0.7% of Income. The "Fundraising" figure of £380 comprised payments to Just Giving, CAF and PayPal. The "Other" figure of £250 was the payment for the Independent Examination of the Accounts.

Letter to Ben Clackson from John Morrell, formerly Chairman of FCRP, 7 May 2020

What a wonderful story the Spring 2020 Valerie Taylor Trust newsletter has to tell – another year of progress. The title could just as well have been "Celebrating 50 Incredible years" for, as it happens, it is just 50 years ago that the journey started. I was Hon. Treasurer of St James Fulmer, and the Taylor family were our next door neighbours. We learned of Valerie's mission and on that first occasion we gave half of our Christian Aid Appeal to Valerie to help her on her way. The next year St James had a special Valerie Taylor Appeal and raised £1,700. At that time, my other next door neighbour Edward Guinness persuaded me that it was time to formalise the charity – for that is what it had become – with tax relief benefits for donors. As so, the "Friends of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed" was formed with myself as Chair and Edward as Vice Chair. We ran on very happily – extending to St James, Gerrards Cross – and raised over £50,000 over the next ten years. We paid for the plot of land on which the Centre now stands. What followed was a great sadness for Edward and myself for the loss of personal links to all past donors, However the VTT has proved a more than worthy successor – which we have supported.

I would just add a word for Wendy who was very committed to the cause all those years ago and to whom we were very indebted for spreading the word. A gentle and lovely person.

Kind regards,

John Morrell

PLEASE ADVISE THE ADMINISTRATOR IF YOU CHANGE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL OR TELEPHONE NUMBER SO THAT WE ARE ABLE TO KEEP YOU UP TO DATE WITH INFORMATION, NEWSLETTERS ETC. Thank you.

Anna Wright. Visiting CRP in January 2020

Mornings start early in Bangladesh. From 5am the Mosques start their calls, beckoning people to start their day in prayer. Women wake and start to cook delicious but laborious curries. Children rise a little later getting dressed, and then for many, taking a rickshaw or bus to school. The Dhaka traffic means that for those who have to travel any distance they must start very early or risk being late. The workday at CRP starts at 8am. Living on site I walk out of my flat across the hardened mud paths to the basketball court. The air is misty and cold in early January. I shiver a little as my flip flops and salwar kameez are not quite warm enough first thing. I pass patients and staff in wheelchairs or on foot. I see a man who walks with a limp and a lady is supported by her daughter hurrying towards one of the clinics. The children from the hostel pass in front of me, wheeling themselves fast in their wheelchairs towards the school ready for the start for start of the day. Everyone seems purposeful – they all have somewhere to go.

As I arrive at the physio group in the paediatric department, 20 mothers arrive with me, each carrying their disabled child into the physio gym. The children are wrapped up with woolly hats and coats. They have slept in a room along the corridor, as they will for 2 weeks. This morning they are here to learn about how to help their child with physiotherapy techniques. Each child is supported to sit on a small wooden box by their mother. Some children look around expectantly, others wiggle trying to get back in the warmth of their mother's laps. The physio at the front starts the class and obediently all the mothers follow the instructions and join in the songs. The children mainly start to smile, all except one child who finds it too much and has to be comforted. The songs are sung in Bengali and sound more like chanting than specific tunes. I can tell by the actions that one song is 'The wheels on the bus'. The mothers help their children to join in. Some of the mothers look at me curiously and I try to reassure them with a smile as my Bengali is very limited.

The second class of the day is led by an occupational therapist. I am surprised at how well the children tolerate two consecutive hours of therapy. The mothers are eager to learn as much as they can in these two weeks. For some they hope to learn enough therapy to last them a lifetime. Hosneara, head of paediatric therapy and Milli, head of physio, help me to build a timetable of treatment and teaching. They are both willing to answer my questions and welcome me warmly.

Over the next two weeks I am lucky enough to work individually with most of the paediatric physios and interns, observing their treatment sessions and making some suggestions based on my experience of treating children with cerebral palsy in England. The therapists want to learn and are keen to hear about new ways of working. I also carry out some more formal teaching sessions to the whole paediatric department physios with about 12 in a session. I find preparing these sessions help me to reflect on the ways we do things in London, and the pros and the cons of working in the NHS.

What do I take away? An awe at the setup of CRP. The sheer numbers of children that come for help. The high hopes of the families and the desperation of poverty. But day by day the therapists are working to help families and changing the perception of disability.

Invitation to Annual Supporters' Meeting

You are all cordially invited to the

2021 Annual Supporters' Meeting at

St. Paul's Community Centre, 5, Rossmore Road, London, NW1 6NJ

on **Saturday 15th May, 2021 at 2.00pm.**

A light lunch will be available from 1.00pm.

Please note this date in your diaries NOW, but it is subject to change depending on the Government's Coronavirus Restrictions at the time.



Child using standing frame with physio.

Looking to buy someone a present?

Liz Timms, a long-standing supporter of CRP and VTT, has compiled three books about CRP based on the anecdotes, experiences and stories of those who have worked there or been a volunteer. The books give an excellent overview of the work of CRP through the personal profiles and eyes of these supporters. The new book, **'JOURNEYS 2'** and the previous books are available for a donation of £10.00, plus £5.00 postage and packing. Books may be obtained by contacting the Administrator on 01622 743011 or email: admin@valerietaylortrust.org, sending a cheque made payable to VTT. Alternatively, copies of the book may be ordered via a link on the VTT website – www.valerietaylortrust.org

Can You Help?

We are short of Area-Coordinators to circulate information and newsletters, by email or post in the following areas.

a) West Country, b) Northern Ireland, c) London/Middlesex. Members or supporters, who are interested in helping, should contact the VTT Administrator (details below). It is not necessary for you to live in the area concerned.

For further information, or to change any of the data we hold on your behalf, please contact:-

VTT Administrator, 4, Wilberforce Road, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4HA

Tel:- 01622 743011; Email:- admin@valerietaylortrust.org; Website:- www.valerietaylortrust.org

2020 Annual Supporters Meeting (held via Zoom)

Brian Woodgate, Administrator, reports:

Because of the pandemic, this virtual meeting was held online, using Zoom, at 2pm, Saturday, 12th September, 2020. There were 8 Trustees and 20 members and supporters present, together with Brian Woodgate, (Administrator), Valerie Taylor and Shafiq-ul Islam, (Executive Director, CRP). Apologies were received from Khokon and Bryan Whitty.

Welcome: Ben Clackson welcomed supporters to the meeting, and particularly welcomed Valerie Taylor and Shafiq-ul-Islam who had joined the meeting from Bangladesh. He thanked them for pre-recording video messages which would be played later in the meeting. Sayadul Khaled then welcomed British Bangladeshi supporters and guests in their mother tongue, particularly, Sayed Abdul Goffar, who provided the building for the first Moulvibazar Centre and is now living in London.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman drew attention to three highlights of the year ending in April 2020.

Firstly, in November and December, Glen McGhee had been able to visit CRP both to represent VTT in CRP's 40th Anniversary Celebrations, and to use his experience as an orthotist in the Prosthetics and Orthotics Department. The Chairman noted that the Prosthetics and Orthotics service at CRP has developed tremendously in recent years, and recommended supporters to read Liz Timms's inspiring new book about people who have benefitted from CRP's prosthetic limbs and devices, which can be obtained from the administrator, Brian Woodgate, in return for a donation. The second highlight was the visit of Jan and Roger Varney to celebrate the official opening of the newly equipped operating theatre at CRP Savar in February. Jan and Roger had played a big part in collaboration with CRP in getting the container with the equipment to Bangladesh. That celebration was of course only just in time: covid-19 spread both in the UK and Bangladesh the following month.

The final highlight was that VTT's income of over £350,000 was nearly as high as the previous year, thanks both to generous bequests and to the donations of supporters. Because expenditure was less than 1% of income, VTT had been able to transfer the remaining 99% of it to CRP. He thanked all supporters for the part they had played in this excellent result.

He particularly thanked Helen Mortimer for again editing the excellent Spring Newsletter, in the course of moving house from New York back to the UK, and Brian Woodgate for all he had done especially to streamline VTT's email communications during the pandemic. Finally he thanked the Treasurer Sayadul Khaled and Secretary Pete Donnelly for all they had done during year behind the scenes. They had been great to work with and VTT was very fortunate to have them.

Election of Trustees: As provided in the Constitution, three of the Trustees had to resign: Bryan Whitty, Margaret Hakim, and Ben Clackson. Bryan Whitty had sadly decided for family reasons not to stand for re-election. Valerie Taylor, of course, had known him for decades, ever since he was a young doctor in the hospital at Chandragona, but the Chairman thanked him on this occasion for his outstanding contribution to VTT, particularly in building up the supporter network in Scotland. Returning to the election, Margaret Hakim and Ben Clackson were standing for re-election and Helen Mortimer had also been nominated for election. In the absence of other nominations those three were elected.

Treasurer's Report: The main part of the report is summarized in a section above.

Sayadul thanked individual trustees for their support, and spoke of being inspired on visits to CRP when he saw how patients who would otherwise have been burdens on their families had been transformed in the course of treatment at CRP and were once again able to support their families. Finally, for help answering requests for information, he thanked the Executive Director, Mr Shafiq, the CRP Accounts Department (Mizan), the Fundraising Department (Mahedul Islam) and the Sylhet Centre Chief (Kamrul Hasan Choudhury Subho).

Speakers: Summaries of the recorded speeches by Shafiq-ul Islam and Valerie Taylor are reproduced separately below. The introduction to the Moulvibazar Project, by Peter Donnelly, is produced below along with a poster that can be printed off for display if required.

Breakout rooms: For the last 20 minutes, the meeting was divided up into Zoom "breakout rooms" of 4 people each to enable conversations between supporters.

Summary of Recorded Speeches

Shafiq ul-Islam: CRP during the pandemic - He thanked VTT for the opportunity to address the meeting, and for its support for marginalised communities in Bangladesh. Turning to the effects of the pandemic, he noted that the impact of Covid-19 was already evident in the fall in the number of outpatients in the year to the end of June 2020: having risen steadily in the preceding decade from 48,000 per year to 77,000, the number fell to 58,000 in 2019-2020. This fall was reflected in a (smaller) fall in CRP's overall annual income from £5.8m to £5.4m.

Like all other healthcare and rehabilitation institutions in Bangladesh, CRP has faced great challenges as a result of Covid-19, including motivation of staff and beneficiaries, and arrangements for their safety and protection. In particular, for staff there was the challenge of providing PPE and continuing to pay their salaries despite the decline in income. While services to paralysed patients in CRP's hospital continued throughout, the Centre was closed to outpatients for 2 months while the Covid-19 arrangements were put in place, and when the service to outpatients was gradually resumed in June, CRP was the first centre to re-open therapeutic intervention for marginalised disabled people which followed all the Bangladesh Government guidelines. Gradually outpatient numbers are now rising.

The effect on CRP's educational institutions has been even more serious, because all educational institutions, from children's play schools to universities and vocational training centres, have been closed since mid-March by Government order. Thus BHPI, the Nursing College, and the William and Marie Taylor inclusive Primary School are all physically closed. Despite the resulting collapse in income from fees, TRP, the Trust Governing CRP, decided to continue to pay staff from Reserves. From July, lecturers and teachers started providing online teaching, but some students do not have access to the internet, whether through laptop or mobile phone. This means that when physical teaching/learning restarts, there will be a disparity between students who haven't been able to connect online and those who have.

He noted other challenges faced by the educational institutions:

1. The need to maintain rent payments for the WMTS hostel accommodation.
2. The difficulty of enrolling new students because Government has not held the school-leaving (12th grade) exams which are the normal source of new BHPI and Nursing College enrolment.
3. Newly qualified PT's, OT's and SLT's who have finished their courses at BHPI face difficulties finding jobs. Normally CRP itself has employed many of these, but it cannot do so now because of the fall in outpatient numbers.

Valerie Taylor - Valerie began by thanking us for our support through donations, prayers and volunteers. She showed video clips of the 40th Anniversary celebrations last December, including speeches from Dr Luis Garcia, a spinal surgeon from Spain who happened to be visiting with a team of colleagues, and from Dr Dipu Moni, the Minister of Education. The motto for the celebrations was "I am CRP" and staff members were given a booklet reminding them of the 6 core values: sensitivity, compassion, collaboration, respect, cleanliness and commitment to excellence.

Following the onset of Covid-19, one very encouraging piece of news was that, in June, the Bangladesh Prime Minister's Office gave CRP £880,000 to be put into a fixed deposit account. The interest from this sum will be used to pay for, or subsidise, the treatment of patients who cannot afford the full costs. This had been a wonderful encouragement to CRP at a challenging time.

Valerie also told us that the centre being built at Manikganj, on land given by Mrs Rehana Mahmud, with construction costs paid for by the Social Welfare Ministry of the Government of Bangladesh, had in the last few weeks reached the point at which the Madhab Memorial Vocational Training Institute could be transferred to the new centre, relieving the congestion at CRP Savar. Her video message ended with a dance by patients from the Mental Health Day Centre at Gonokhbari. This centre is being run by 3 OT's so as to give people suffering with mental health conditions the confidence and the skills needed for them to return home and resume their previous way of living.

The original video message, with better video resolution than we were able to show on Zoom, is now available at https://youtu.be/KUe2_wCamN8

Questions and Comments and Answers

Margaret Hakim said the messages from Shafiq and Valerie had been really inspiring.

Pete Donnelly thanked her for her remarks and said that if Shafiq and Valerie permitted it, the videos would be put on Youtube.

Shafiq explained the direct impact of Covid-19 on staff in answer to Liz Timms's question. He felt CRP had been fortunate that more people had not been affected: out of about 1200 staff members, only 12 tested positive, including 4 at Mirpur, 5 at Savar and 1 at Sylhet. And, of these, only one member of staff (at Savar) had to be hospitalised. Of the 80 or so in-patients at Savar, only 4 tested positive. These 4 were isolated and subsequently treated in a specialised hospital. He explained that BRAC had enabled testing to be done in a booth at the Savar campus, and the Bangladesh Government had enabled the test samples to be analysed in a Government Lab.

Sayadul asked if there were any plans to enable final year students (at BHPI and the Nursing College) to sit their final exams, and for enrolling the new intake of students for the coming year. Shafiq replied that on both matters CRP could not take action unless the Government allowed it. The Government was considering the possibilities and making plans but had not yet made them public. However, as regards enrolment, there was good news that within the last week Dhaka University had authorised BHPI to take 30 more students (10 PT's, 10 OT's and 10 SLT's) for the new year beginning in January.

Sarwar Hasan, from Glasgow, said that he was in contact with a member of a forum of Bangladeshi senior doctors and specialists in the United States which was offering remote support and online advice to various hospitals in Bangladesh during the pandemic. He wondered if such support might be of use to CRP. Pete said VTT could help with putting doctors in contact with each other.

Azan Haque CRP Letter

I arrived at CRP at the beginning of December, having completed my studies for the semester. I had been meaning to come to CRP for a few years, and finally, I had my chance. The first thing I noticed was the friendliness of the community. The staff, patients, and other volunteers were very warm and welcoming. The volunteer accommodations, including the work Shamoly did, made the stay quite comfortable. Even luckier for me, the William and Marie Taylor School where I spent much of my time, is very close to the volunteer hostel.

The children in the school are some of the brightest, talented, and most persevering human beings I have ever met. Their stories are all amazing. Much of the work I did was helping the therapists during the school's various therapy sessions. The therapy included relieving muscle tension, various exercises, and speech therapy. Due to the unique difficulties faced by the children, most of whom have cerebral palsy, consistent therapy is required. The staff were very friendly and dedicated individuals, and I could sense they truly cared for the wellbeing of the students. I also visited the other wards, and particularly the paediatric unit. The work done in the paediatric unit was very impressive. In particular, empowering mothers to be able to take care of their children's unique needs by teaching them various exercises for balance and motion. Under the guidance of the therapists, I was able to participate as well. It is an amazing feeling to be able to interact with children and improve their quality of life.

The other main way I spent my time was with after-school activities for the schoolchildren. This was done at the children's hostel. Mostly these activities involved teaching or musical instruments. While quite challenging finding activities that all the children could participate in, it was nevertheless an impactful and fun way to enrich the children's evening. Even for children who could not participate in games, the visits were important so that the children could have someone else to interact with.

Finally, there were various activities that helped reinforce a greater sense of community amongst the people and departments at CRP. Most noteworthy this year was the 40th Anniversary celebrations. I am grateful to have been a part of this monumental achievement. Besides the anniversary other events, such as the wheelchair basketball tournament, are a wonderful thing to behold. It is also a great deal of fun to play oneself. Suffice to say there is always something to do at CRP. It is a wonderful organization that does a great job of fostering a sense of community and improving people's lives. I highly recommend to anyone to take the time to volunteer or support this organization in any way they can.

Pete Donnelly, VTT Secretary:- Fund-raising for the new Moulvibazar Centre

How the Moulvibazar centre started

CRP commenced outpatient rehabilitation services at Moulvibazar district in April, 2011, where it operates in a building donated by Eng. Sayed Abdul Goffar. This was the first divisional centre of CRP outside of Dhaka. In 2014, engineer Sayed Abdul Goffar offered free use of his building till the construction of permanent centre was completed.

Recently, Mr. Md. Afsarul Haque and Mr. Akhtarul Haque donated a 53 decimal land (2150 sqm) to establish a permanent centre at Moulvibazar. The aim is to develop a centre that can offer full provision to the local community within two years.

Future plans for the centre

From the inception of the first Moulvibazar CRP Centre, the full range of services offered by CRP could not be rolled out to disabled people in the local community due to space limitations.

This Moulvibazar Centre will be built in the North of Bangladesh and will support paralysed, disabled, children with cerebral palsy, amputees, stroke patients and mental health patients of the Greater Moulvibazar area. Support offered will include services like therapy, medical consultation, mobility aids and assistive devices such as wheelchairs, artificial limbs, motorised wheelchairs, support seating, braces.

The centre will be built in two phases. In the first phase the building will be constructed up to the second floor. The total cost of the first phase will be £705,000.

CRP–Moulvibazar, Afsarul & Akhtarul Haque Center



How much have we raised?

Donations so far made by GGHSP Fund, Japan Government (£92,000), Engr. Sayed Abdul Goffar (£42,000), Abul Mueyed Chowdhury (£4,700), Rashid Khan (£4,700), Other donations (£4,700), total £148,100.

How much do we need to raise?

Total cost of the first phase	£705,000
Money raised so far	£148,100
Total amount to be raised	£556,900

If you would like to donate or to help spread the message of what we're doing then visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/moulvibazarcrp> or contact the Administrator: admin@valerietaylortrust.org.

Please feel free to print off the poster below to help in publicizing this Project to raise money.



Moulvibazar CRP Centre

The CRP Moulvibazar Centre will be built in the North of Bangladesh and will support disabled people, children with cerebral palsy, amputees, stroke patients and mental health patients of the Greater Moulvibazar area.



To see more information and to donate, visit our **JustGiving™** page here:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/moulvibazarcrp>

Make your donations worth 25% more at no extra cost to you!

When you donate money to this project as a UK taxpayer, we are able to claim back 25p on top of every £1 you give.

Make sure you tick the box as you donate on our Just Giving fundraising page.



CRP
**Centre for the
Rehabilitation
of the Paralysed**

Direct donations contact : admin@valerietaylortrust.org

It is our intention that donors of £1000+, or equivalent currency, will be entitled to have their donation acknowledged on a tablet in the entrance at the new CRP Moulvibazar Centre.