

October 2011

A practical course for one week for Dental Assistants in Phnom Penh



As there were several days of public holidays I was invited to see the non-existent dental service in the far north east of the country. That is 7 hours by taxi from Phnom Penh on reasonable but busy roads then a further 100km by 4x4. The medical centre had a room with a refurbished dental chair and a small tin of rather poor instruments. I fitted new tubing and handpieces and with the money donated by patients in Stornoway I was able to buy sufficient instruments and materials to help 2 rural dental nurses provide care for some 20,000 people.



They have asked that if I return next year I spend some time training these dental nurses to properly use the equipment.





I stayed in a guest house but had breakfast and picnic lunches from this local “restaurant”. The other volunteers stayed in a Christian orphanage which looked after about 50 children. We bought lots of meat and vegetables in the markets in Phnom Penh so we could provide some extra meals for the children during our stay.

The local health authority had allowed us the use of a 4x4 to get around and so 10 adults and 24 children were able to spend a

day of sightseeing the gardens and waterfall which was a great outing for the children.



As it was my 30th Wedding Anniversary during my stay the children wanted to have a celebration and they dressed up in traditional costume to perform Khmer dancing and I was to record it and send by Skype to my wife in Stornoway.



Once again I had been given a donation of Teddies knitted by Catherine MacIver of Stornoway which were really appreciated by all the children.

It was back to Phnom Penh for a further 2 weeks of training dental assistants and help organise the two clinics run by the One 2 One charity. They have just employed with sponsorship from New Zealand 4 newly qualified dentists and 4 dental assistants to provide care for some of the many orphanages around Phnom Penh but they still need a lot of help and guidance to administer and manage the clinics.

