

## **A personal letter from Sylvia about the Hospital**

Dear Friends,

As you know, I came to India on January 6th 1982. For three years I worked in the villages from 8.00 am to midnight, giving basic health care and education to the villagers. Many of the staff I recruited are still with me. We worked hard easing pain and saving lives.

In those days, in rural India, health services were very sparse and patients often had to travel many miles to get trained health care or rely on untrained village health workers.

Thanks to the Trust and your kindness, we opened our first hospital in 1985 which grew to 150 beds. These were always full and we also dealt with up to 8,000 out-patients each month. Our high quality health care was always given at minimal cost and, for those unable to pay, free of charge - thanks to your generous support.

Over these thirty five years, India has changed a good deal and, in Tamil Nadu especially, health care provision has improved.

In 2015 a Government Medical College Hospital was opened in Tiruvannamalai, providing an extensive range of free medical services including facilities for In-patient care (about 750 beds) with ready access to various specialties and equipment. This has been a great boon to the poorer people.

Health care is of course expensive, even in India; medical advances and increasing life expectancy create new needs and rising costs. It has become increasingly difficult and indeed unnecessary for me to continue my original medical mission.

Therefore, with much heart searching to know God's will, I have decided to hand over Rangammal Hospital to a consortium of Indian doctors. They will invest a great deal of money to develop services on a more commercial basis but they will still retain an element of charitable work as well as continuing to employ my faithful staff.

Our other services to the deaf and to physically and mentally challenged children will continue and improve even further; the needs are still great and the Government provision is still very basic. These services are given entirely free and still rely on your generosity.

Nurse training will also continue and expand in our College. The students' practical experience will still be provided in both Rangammal Hospital and the new Medical College Hospital.

As you can well imagine, my decision to change the emphasis of my work has not been easy, but my priority, as always, is to meet the most important needs.

Please pray for us. It is not always easy to know God's will and it often takes a great deal of personal soul searching to follow where he leads; sometimes there are tears and we may not get it right! However we all have to put our hands into the hands of God and (as St. Peter was told) be led where he wants us to go!

*God bless you all.*

*Love*

*Sylvia*