

**2020**

## Order of Australia (OAM) Award to Val Smith-Orr RN

12th December 2020

Val is long-standing “Referrer” of patients to the SCT from the clinic she runs in the Philippines, Triple B Care Projects, Inc. <http://www.triplebcareprojects.org/>. The “B” stands for Burns, Bingot and Bulate (the last two words are Tagalog for Cleft lip/Palate and worms).

Val, a Registered Nurse and Clinical Nurse Specialist, specialising in burns and plastic surgery, arrived in the Philippines in 2006 intending to stay for 6 months whilst researching for University of Queensland “Feeding children with cleft palate in a developing world” for her

Masters – she began helping patients in need in her small kitchen and Triple B Projects was born. A long way from where Val was raised in Yorkshire, and her post graduate training in burns and plastic surgery at the McIndoe Unit, Queen Victoria Hospital, Sussex. Val left the UK in 1990 and moved to Australia, becoming a citizen in 2000.

Val and her foster daughter Monalisa attended the Australian Ambassador’s residence in Manila on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 for the investiture of the Order of Australia that was awarded in the Queens Birthday Honours of June 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 “For service to the international community through nursing”. It happened to be Monalisa’s 15<sup>th</sup> birthday as well! Many congratulations Val on this well-deserved honour and Swinfen Charitable Trust would like to say how proud we are of you and all the work that you do.

Photo: Monalisa G. Doncillo and Valerie Catherine Smith-Orr (Val)



## **Meet the Team**

Robyn Carr



What attracted you to go into medicine?

*My mother was a nurse, my father was very ill at a stage when I was young – while sitting with him after school watching the nurses I became interested in following a nursing career.*

What branch of medicine were you in?

*I was involved mainly with cardio-thoracic theatres up to and including heart transplants. The final ten years of hospital work was as a manager in the hospital group's IT department. This also led to becoming President of the world IMIA-NI group (International Medical Informatics Association – Nursing Informatics).*

Why did you get involved with the Trust:

*During a nursing informatics IT conference I was approached to see if I knew anyone who could help. Following investigation regarding requirements, and having retired, I chose to take up the Swinfen Charitable Trust southern hemisphere administrator role myself. I perceived the opportunities that SCT could bring to a wider range of countries especially those remotely positioned and with sparse professional medical support.*

Why do you think the Trust is important?

*There are specialists world-wide willing to share their technical medical knowledge to doctors who do not have specialist medical support. Embracing the specialist skills and linking them with mainly singular doctors is a superb way to ensure that those in poor and remote countries can obtain a greater degree of care. All this in a swift time frame.*

Can you tell us about some of your memorable cases?

- 1. Five year old twin girls, One was completely normal at birth however, by the age of five one of them started to grow breasts. This caused the mother to be apprehensive regarding sending them to school. The chosen SCT specialist was able to identify the cause and advise on treatment thus frustrating any further mammary growth.*
- 2. The speed of the SCT system (and the coincidental involvement with computers) enabled a system operator and specialist response time of nine minutes. This was for a case referred by a doctor on an extremely remote Melanesian island.*

How would you like people to support the Trust?

*Give us feedback about how we've helped you or a patient which will help to attract sponsorship throughout the world.*

# Defeating Meningitis Roadmap

25th November 2020



Rob Dawson, Trustee of The Swinfen Charitable Trust, is part of a team who has helped secure a significant step towards defeating meningitis globally.

Rob is Director of Communications, Advocacy and Support at Meningitis Research Foundation where he worked with colleagues and a team of experts to help draft the world's first global plan to defeat meningitis.

On November 13th 2020, the World Health Assembly agreed to take action to reduce the impact of the disease dramatically by 2030. The Assembly endorsed this new roadmap which will help to eliminate epidemics and prevent cases the world over, as well as improving treatment, diagnosis and aftercare. It is the first ever meningitis resolution to be approved by World Health Organization member states.

The ambitious roadmap sets out to tackle the leading causes of acute bacterial meningitis (meningococcus, pneumococcus, haemophilus influenzae and group B streptococcus).

Rob said: "This marks a momentous occasion for people affected by or at risk of meningitis – the first time the World Health Assembly has agreed on global goals to defeat the disease."

The roadmap sets targets and milestones for improvements in five areas: prevention and epidemic control; diagnosis and treatment; surveillance; support and care for patients affected; and engagement and advocacy.

## **Meet the Team**

### **Lynda Bardell**



What attracted you to go into medicine?

*I was inspired by an older friend who was already a qualified nurse and I admired her air of knowledge, confidence and sophistication.*

What branch of medicine are you in?

*I commissioned in to the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (QARANC) following Lady Pat Swinfen. The work and assignments were immensely varied, and mostly really interesting and great fun. I worked in operating theatres for quite a few years and saw quite a few cases of battle trauma when deployed on Operations.*

Why did you get involved with the Trust?

*I experienced first-hand the marvellous work of the Trust when Roger and Pat came to Nepal to visit some rural clinics and hospitals who were to use the system to help their patients. I was posted there at the time.*

Why do you think the Trust is important?

*Sick people in very remote and hostile areas can benefit so much from the assistance they receive from our fantastic consultants. It's swift and it's free.*

Any interesting cases you can share with us?

*It's very satisfying when patients with complex illnesses are given great advice from consultants who come together to assist, through the Swinfen Charitable Trust.*

Your most rewarding case?

*All cases are rewarding when the referrer is so happy and especially when they report back that a patient who was once so ill but is now doing so well.*

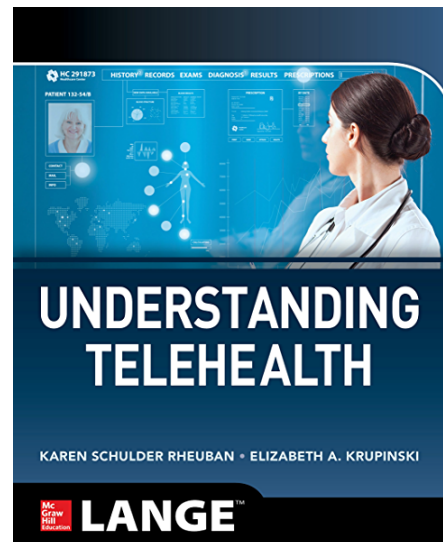
How would you like people to help the Trust?

*Spread the word far and wide about how great telemedicine can be. And volunteer to be a medical consultant or system operator for the Trust.*

## Dr Karen Schulder Rheuban

13th November 2020

The Swinfen Charitable Trust would like to congratulate our Trustee, Dr Karen Schulder Rheuban, and her co-editor Dr Elizabeth Krupinski, on the publication of their book "Understanding Telehealth" (McGraw-Hill Education). Karen is a valued consultant for the SCT as well as a Trustee, and is Professor of Paediatrics, Senior Associate Dean for Continuing Medical Education and External Affairs and Director of the Center for Telehealth at the University of Virginia.



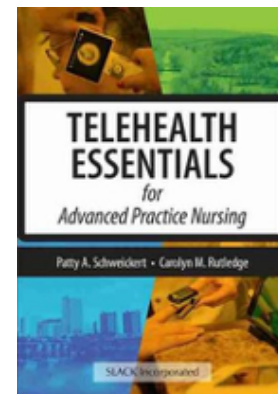
## Two new Specialised Medical Publications

31st October 2020

The Swinfen Charitable Trust would like to say how honoured they are to be mentioned in the following books which have recently been published:



*Telehealth Essentials for Advanced Practice Nursing* by Patty A. Schweickert and Carolyn M. Rutledge  
*Revolutionizing Tropical Medicine, Point-of-Care Tests, New Imaging, Technologies and Digital Health* edited by Kerry Atkinson and David Mabey (Part V Telemedicine: Chapter 26 Telemedicine for Clinical Management of Adults in Remote and Rural Areas and Chapter 27 Telemedicine for the



Delivery of Specialist Pediatric Services). With thanks to Anthony C. Smith, one of our valued Consultants.

## Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Hospital, Saipan

29th October 2020

The Swinfen Charitable Trust received a private donation made on behalf of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Hospital, Saipan, in the Northern Mariana Islands so we thought we'd provide some information on this great hospital, in a place most of us have probably never heard of!

Although situated in an idyllic tropical paradise, the CHCH is resource limited, sometimes basic equipment is hard to come by and the medical professionals use all their skills and initiative to solve complex issues, which is where Telemedicine comes in: SCT provides access to consultants and specialists from all over the world, 24/7.

And a message from our donor: "Although it is technically a US territory, the Northern Mariana Islands are remote and physically isolated, making referral for specialty care difficult or impossible. 40% of our residents are also not US citizens and thus ineligible for many services those on the mainland can take for granted. The SCT consultants have provided us with an invaluable service, often superior to that which is available in rural mainland America".

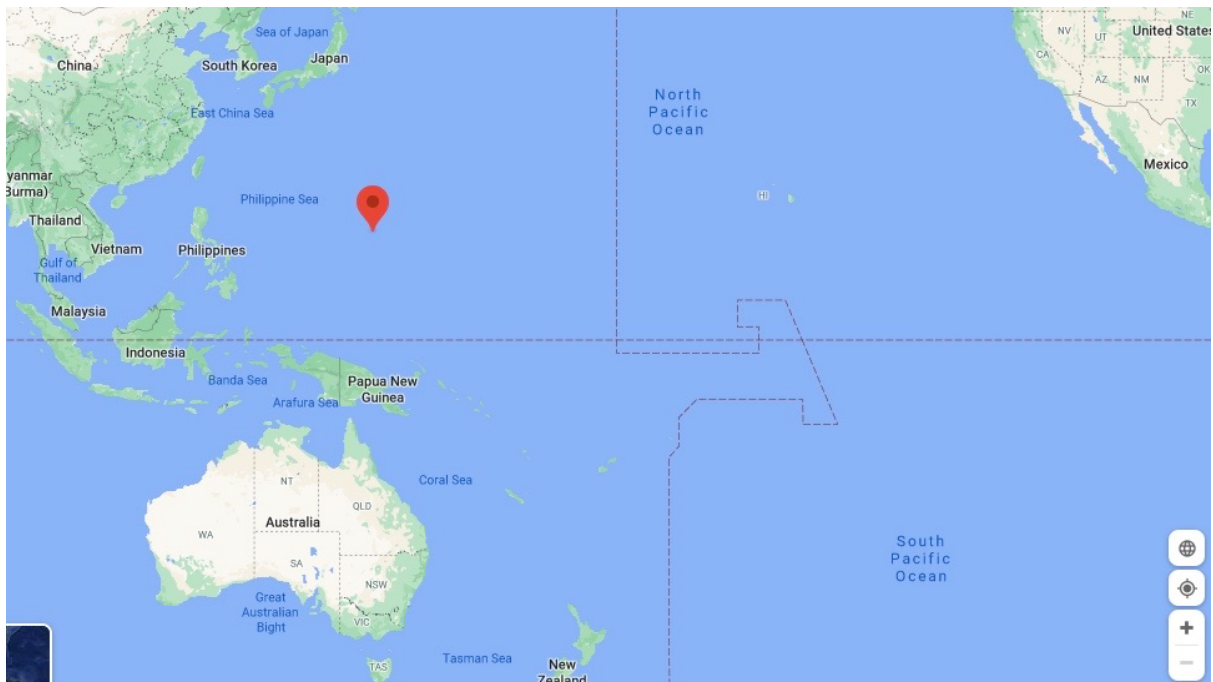
For more information visit the CHCH Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/cnmichcc> and <http://www.saipandoctors.com/>.



The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Hospital,  
Saipan



Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands





## Arabella's New Haircut

12th June 2020 [Victoria Johnson](#)



Swinfen Telemedicine Trustee Arabella Mayo has had her hair shaved off in support of her father, Lord Swinfen one of the founders of The Swinfen Charitable Trust.

***I have shaved my head! for The Swinfen Charitable Trust because I wanted to support my father through chemo.***

Arabella is unable to visit Lord Swinfen with the current Coronavirus restrictions in place, she has taken the brave step of having her head shaved, as a mark of support as he undergoes chemotherapy, one of the potential side effects of chemotherapy being a loss of hair.

A JustGiving donation page has been set up, with all funds going to the Swinfen Charitable Trust.



### JustGiving™

You can donate to the Swinfen Charitable Trust from the home page, or via Arabella's Just Giving page.

Thanks to Charles: husband, hairdresser and fellow trustee and Elizabeth: daughter and photographer.

# Valerie Smith-Orr, Order of Australia Medal Award

10th June 2020 Victoria Johnson

One of the Nursing specialists who is a referrer with the Swinfen Trust's Telemedicine system is Nurse Valerie Smith-Orr, working in the Philippines.

Valerie has been awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the general division in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List 'For service to the international community through nursing'.



Val Smith-Orr was born and raised in Yorkshire, UK. She completed her post graduate training at the famous McIndoe Unit at Queen Victoria Hospital where she received her badge in Plastic Surgery.

In 1990, Val emigrated to Australia and became a citizen in 2000. She attended the University of Sydney in 2003 and graduated with a Certificate in Health Science. In 2005, she started her Masters Research at the University of Queensland (UQ). However, shortly after, her life plans changed when she took a trip to the Philippines.

In 2006, Val arrived in the Philippines for a six-month stint, collecting data for her research at UQ. Her topic of study was "feeding children with cleft palate in a developing world" and involved interviewing mothers to see what methods they used to feed their children.

When she initially began her research, she had over 200 families participate. One child was a tiny baby girl weighing 2.7 kg (5.9 lbs), the size of a newborn, except she was several months old. The girl was very malnourished and quite blue in colour. Val thought the girl would die in her arms.



The child's family agreed to allow Val to care for her for one month. After two weeks of care, one night, the baby girl stopped breathing, and Val managed to keep her alive through external airway resuscitation (E.A.R). The baby survived and has been in Val's care ever since.

Val started Triple B Care Projects after she began helping patients in need in her small kitchen.

## An Indian Case of Beta Thalassemia Trait

5th June 2020 admin

By Lynda Bardell



Dr Elizabeth Searle works at a hospital in Jharkhand, India. In August 2019 she referred one of her patients to the Swinfen Charitable Trust. Dr Searle was worried about this 27-year-old lady who was 23 weeks pregnant with her second child. The lady had travelled from a remote jungle area and was feeling unwell. She was anaemic and her haemoglobin was falling despite her taking prescribed iron supplements. The oral

supplements were causing uncomfortable and potentially risky side effects. Fortunately, her unborn child appeared to be developing normally.

Further blood investigations showed this young lady had Beta Thalassemia Trait which was increasing her anaemia with potential risk to her health and her unborn child. The patient's first child was born almost two years previously by caesarean section after labour difficulties. Consequently, the patient was expected to deliver her second child by caesarean section again. As the lady lived in a remote area, if there was a problem during the pregnancy or especially at caesarean section, a blood

transfusion would not be available unless she was able to move to a large medical facility in a city. The family had no means to facilitate this. Dr Elizabeth required expert advice on whether a blood transfusion was the only safe way to raise the patient's haemoglobin and what implications the diagnosis of Beta Thalassaemia Trait would have on the pregnancy and the unborn child.

Dr Elizabeth reached out to the Swinfen Charitable Trust via the telemedicine referral link. The next day she received advice and information from two of the Trust's consultants who concurred that pregnancy outcomes and obstetric complications should be no different for her patient than those in the general population. The consultants continued to support Dr Elizabeth, with advice and suggestions, as she managed her patient's medical complications throughout the remainder of the pregnancy.

A message came from Dr Elizabeth just before Christmas to report that the lady had undergone emergency caesarean section at 37 weeks and had a healthy 2.6 kg girl. Both mother and baby were doing well. All Swinfen volunteers involved in the referral were overjoyed at this wonderful news. Without the Swinfen telemed link available to Dr Elizabeth in India the outcomes for this mother and baby may have been quite different.

## [Dr Judith Darmady](#)

[5th June 2020](#) [Victoria Johnson](#)

Dr Judith Darmady, OBE, one of the Swinfen Charitable Trust's earliest and most prominent paediatric consultants has died of Covid-19 on April 13, 2020, aged 84.

Her most significant achievements were in one of Romania's infamous orphanages for the "incurables". Dr Darmady was first invited to the Ungureni orphanage north of Bucharest after the fall of the Ceausescu dictatorship in 1989. More than 100,000 children had been abandoned after Ceausescu had taxed childless couples and banned contraception and abortion. The huge mass of abandoned children who failed perfunctory tests at the age of three were deemed incurable and hidden away.

After taking a six-month sabbatical from the NHS to go to Romania in 1990, she knew that something bigger was needed and established the Ungureni Trust to pay for British clinical staff to help Romanian children and their carers.

Judith Mary Darmady qualified at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, in 1961, "Dr D", as she became known to patients and parents alike. In 1972 she became a consultant at Basingstoke Hospital, where she stayed for 23-years and acquired extensive expertise in a wide range of conditions, including cancers, cystic fibrosis, and disability. Her concern for childhood sexual abuse prompted the development of special services in Hampshire. In 1996 she became a fellow of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

In 2012 she was runner-up for The Times/Sternberg Active Life Award honouring the achievement of individuals above the age of 70 who have excelled in any field with a focus on charity endeavours. She continued her charity work tirelessly until last year.

Judith Mary Darmady (b 1935; q London 1961; OBE, MRCS Eng, LRCP Lond, DCH Eng, FRCP Lond, FRCPCH), died from covid-19 on 13 April 2020

Source: The Times, The BMJ and Basingstoke Gazette