

Thank you

We would like to thank all our donors, without your support over the last 24 years we would not have been able to grow and offer this exceptional service. We would particularly like to thank those Grant making Trusts who have continued to support us and all those of you who donate regularly.

APP support

Thank you to St Michaels and All Angels in Chiswick who have offered continued support this year, all the money they have donated has gone specifically towards the up grading of our Apps, both Android and iOS. Many of our users do not have Smart phones. We do our best to work with the capability on the ground, and not assume that all communities have reached the same technical advances we have here.

This costs us a lot more – but we do not leave people behind, instead we adapt and make sure even if it costs us more, that we keep those in need at the top of the list. We also take detailed instruction of what facilities they have available to them, what medication etc., so the specialists can tailor their advice accordingly.

Future Fundraising

As many of you will be aware we are a volunteer run Charity with no administrators paid for their work. All money raised goes towards our unique IT infrastructure, which enables doctors to get help to those in need securely. We now hope to raise enough funds to support the Next Generation Platform to take this work through to the future and enable the new NGO to widen the help that the Swinfen Telemedicine service can give to a much greater community. If you feel able to support us in our transition towards this future we would be most grateful.

You can donate online through our website www.swinfentelemed.org or contact admin@swinfentrust.org for further details of how to support this initiative.



www.swinfentelemed.org

Registered Charity Number 1077879



Lady Patricia Swinfen MBE 1936-2023

Lady Patricia Swinfen MBE, sadly died on Thursday 9 February. Together with her late husband Roger, she co-founded and ran the Swinfen Charitable Trust. Patricia was born in Dublin in 1936, into an Anglo-Irish family; her mother's family came from Northern Ireland and her father was from Somerset. Pat was trained at the Adelaide in Dublin and after 4 years of intensive training, at a teaching hospital of "huge warmth and friendliness", she had her heart set on joining the Queens Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps and so went for further training at the QARANC officers Commissioning course at Haslemere, Surrey after which she was posted to Millbank, London in 1961. From there she went to BMH M'tarfa in Malta. In August 1961 she was sent to serve in BMH Benghazi and on arrival was taken to lunch at the beach club where she was introduced to a number of subalterns, amongst whom was Roger. On marrying in 1962, Patricia had to resign her commission, she devoted herself to her children and continued to work as a Nurse as well as volunteering for SSAFA for very many years. (The Soldier, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) for very many years. Pat's training as a QA and at the Adelaide established a standard of Nursing that never left her and was to act as the guiding principle throughout her later work with the charity.

The charity was set up in 1998 after Pat and Roger decided that a simple store and forward telemedicine system would go a long way to helping those in need – with the first small pilot set up in Bangladesh in 1999 the charity gradually took over their lives, and they went on a mission to widen our specialist pool and spread the word of telemedicine. We now have links in 96 countries, 427 hospitals or remote clinics; we have a simple system, an email comes in – one of the four specialist nurses – 2 here

in the UK and 2 in New Zealand – allocate the case to the appropriate specialist. They then keep an eye on the case; if it is not answered by that specialist it is re-allocated to the next one on the list. We try not to overload anyone, if they can answer – great, if not – no problem we find someone who can. It is in a secure platform, the specialist gives help directly to the doctor on the ground – from one medic to another – we are really the equivalent of a large dating site; we match people and then step back. Some of our individual cases go on for years.

The Future

Now our founders have died, we as trustees have three options. Close the charity – the simple answer, but one that would let others down hugely – try and stumble on as we are or transform it into a lasting legacy which will expand. The partnership between Roger and Pat was one of equals and they adored each other, no question about it. They pulled together as a team and when one struggled the other pulled stronger, and during their last years we had conversations as to how they would like their work to continue. To honour their commitment, we are now working on taking the charity forward to the next stage with a new Next Generation Platform, which we hope will have greater educational capability and full administrative support and will take Pat and Roger’s legacy into the future in a way that was approved by them both.



New NGO

We have chosen as Trustees that the time is now right to help set up a new international NGO under the directorship of our long-time and trusted System Architect, Sankalpa Ghose. This will have telemedicine at the core, and the Swinfen Network will seed this new initiative. We hope that by doing this, we will encourage others to join the network and we are in discussion with other major NGO’s to help them achieve their own telemedical system under the umbrella organisation that we are helping set up. In order to achieve this aim, we are as a charity now concentrating all our funds on building the Next generation System, and to raise enough funds to ensure a smooth transition from the British Charity – which will cease once we are ready, moving the Platform over to the new NGO in 2024.

We want to reassure all those who use the system as referring doctors or medics, **that nothing will change for them**, they will still be able to submit a request for help and we will answer. And for our marvellous consultants who have offered their time and experience for Free, we hope that many will come with us to the new NGO and continue their amazing work as we seek to spread the word of this essential service to those in need.

Our Consultants range in all specialities from across the Western World – and give their time for Free. We have often been asked why these busy, capable people would volunteer their time to us. Many of our consultants have expressed relief at being able to use their expertise in a situation where they know they are making a real difference to people who would otherwise be left. Most people in this world cannot afford private treatment or to be “medevaced” out of an area to a more substantial institution – they are often left with little or no help at all – we try and get them that help. We offer Hope. Many consultants have spoken about the challenge of dealing with cases that have presented far later than we would here and therefore they also learn from their experiences but above all they feel that they get to help people, for free and make a real difference in this world.

One of the key advantages of this system is that we have learnt over the years that by teaching the doctors and medics on the ground how to deal with some of the cases that arrive in our in box – that they too, go on to teach others in their countries and the knowledge spreads and trickles through. We hope with the new NGO to widen the facility to get doctors on the ground the medical knowledge they need, and this will enable them to expand their learning and will benefit the communities they serve.

We would like to thank our wonderful System Operators, Loveday Ellis, Lynda Simmons, Robyn Carr and Paul Stephens for all their support and help over the past year. Pat allocated four cases on the afternoon of her last illness, and we know that she would have been so grateful to her team who picked up the torch seamlessly and carried us all forward with such support and love during a very difficult time. On behalf of the Trust administration and Trustees we would like to thank them for their unstinting support and help over this past year.

Our Mission will not change

*We offer a virtual hospital that never runs out of beds, has no political master and welcomes every patient, **Free of Charge***