

## Reflection Report for Elective training program in Chaurjahari Hospital, Nepal Ma Lawrence Wing Hin (HKU M25)

Being at Chaurjahari Hospital in Nepal was one of the most transformative experiences of my life. The hospital is located near a valley separating several districts in Nepal and played an important role during the earthquake in November due to their location close to the epicenter. There were a couple days where the doctor's there worked day and night to treat people who were affected by the event.

Prior to arriving in Nepal, I felt a mixture of excitement and anxiety. I was looking forward to how God would reveal himself during the trip but also felt uncertain due to the language barrier and unfamiliarity with the culture and people there. Although the language barrier limited my communication with patients, the doctors would sometimes kindly translate and help me understand what was said. I was also able to look at the medical charts and patient notes, which were written in English.

The schedule of my attachment included daily morning rounds followed by outpatient clinics with the different departments, including internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, and obstetrics. There were also daily evening rounds where doctors discussed the cases of the day, followed by group prayer and a devotional time. During my trip, some of the more prevalent conditions I saw included COPD, kidney stones and fractures. Kidney stones are common here since many do not drink enough water and become dehydrated. Many people here are exposed to cooking fumes and smoke, which increases the prevalence of lung conditions like COPD. The roads are also quite mountainous and underdeveloped, often resulting in road traffic accidents. During my stay, we also had the opportunity of delivering supplies, including blankets and toiletries to nearby villages that were impacted by the earthquake. We witnessed many broken homes and infrastructure in these regions, resulting in many families now living in temporary shelters.

Some of the valuable lessons on this trip included the power of prayer, the fruits of walking with the LORD and the blessing of community.

### Power of Prayer

The team of doctors and nurses would begin each day with prayer, song, and daily updates. This was a time when each department would share updates on the patient's conditions and receive training on different medical conditions such as eclampsia. During morning rounds. One memorable patient arrived with exacerbation of COPD to a severity where doctors were unsure whether he would survive. However, after days of monitoring the patients' vitals, praying for the patient, and updating the family on the ups and downs of the patient's condition, he gradually recovered and was able to leave the hospital. The doctors shared that they could only do what they can with their medical knowledge and medicine available. The outcome ultimately depended on God. This taught me the importance of prayer and not giving up on your patients even when the situation seems dim. Although the resources here are limited and only the basic investigations and imaging are available, God has used the medicine and doctors here to bring hope and healing to those who come to this facility.

## Walking with the LORD

One of the doctors shared that when we put the LORD first in our work, he will bless us in different ways such as joy and contentment with our work. Although it can be convenient to choose a lifestyle that is comfortable, we must be aware of where the LORD is calling us and be focused on how he can use the gifts he has given us to serve him and the community. I see this perspective lived out when I hear the doctors share their stories of how God led them to work at Chaurjahari Hospital. Many understood the needs of this community and responded by coming here with their families and children. I believe the LORD has shaped the doctors here into more Christ-like individuals, which is evident in the love they show to patients and to each other. For instance, many have close relationships with the patients since they take the time to listen and understand their patient's needs. As a result, patients trust them and make the journey to the hospital to see the doctors there. Some must travel for up to a day on the dusty paths that are prone to road traffic accidents. The people here also carry a sense of calm confidence and satisfaction since they know that the LORD is with them. Although there are challenges associated with working in a rural setting, such as low resources, they are confident that the LORD will provide the necessities and will continue to work through them in this broken world.

## Blessings of Community

I noticed that God also has blessed this community with unity amongst the doctors. During my stay, I saw doctors meeting each day to talk about their patients and discuss methods to improve their conditions. The more experienced doctors mentored and guided the junior doctors in providing the best treatment for each patient. One example was when a junior doctor performed a caesarean section with supervision from an obstetrician. The doctor began by checking the patient's health status, ensuring the equipment was working, and comforting the mother. During the procedure, the obstetrician offered guidance towards where to place the first cut and identifying the anatomical layers before reaching the womb. The obstetrician helped when the doctor struggled to push the baby out and together, they successfully removed the baby, who had begun to cry. I remember feeling a sense of awe at the teamwork to make this possible and the happiness on the mother's face when she first laid eyes on her child. Outside of work, the families also gathered sometimes for bible study and would attend church service in the community every Saturday. This was a time when they worshipped the LORD together and lifted each other up in prayer.

