

ROTARY & INTERPLAST A GOOD NEWS STORY

The Direct Patient Support project is one of Interplast's creative solutions aimed at continuing to provide reconstructive surgical care despite the travel limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this project, Interplast and Rotary together fund patient surgeries in Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Sri Lanka.

Patients like nine-year-old Rewan have been the beneficiaries of this life-changing surgical intervention.

Rewan is one of 6 children, living with their parents on a farm in the remote, eastern hills of Nepal.

Severely burnt on his neck while trying to start a fire with petrol in a cow shed, Rewan was initially cared for with dressing changes at the local district hospital, an agonising 24-hour drive from his home.

Without having access to the sophisticated burns treatment that we take for granted in New Zealand and Australia, the burnt tissue formed significant contractures under Rewan's chin and on his neck. In 2021 he was transferred to Kirtipur hospital in Kathmandu, a further 24-hour drive from the district hospital. There he underwent surgery for more than 8 hours to correct the neck deformity caused by the burn scarring and contractures.

Under the care of Dr Bishal Karki, Rewan spent 3 days in intensive care before being transferred to the post-operative ward. Finally he was well enough to be transferred to the general ward, where his father could at last visit his little son.

Rewan's father expressed his happiness and gratitude for the treatment his son received, thanking everyone involved for the support which enabled the life-changing surgery.



Rewan pictured after his surgery in 2021

Burns are a leading cause of unintentional, life-threatening injuries among young children in developing nations.

Both surgery and post-operative rehabilitation are essential to restoring function after a severe burn, particularly in children where burn contractures can often result in a life-long disability.

The Direct Patient Support program, funded by Interplast and Rotary donations, not only provides desperately needed care to the people of Nepal. The program also enables the Nepali surgeons to partner with a volunteer Interplast surgeon, who can remotely mentor his colleagues by providing advice and support.

Surgeries such as those made available to Rewan not only benefit the patients and their families, but also provide opportunities for upskilling the surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses.

With Rotary's support, patients like Rewan can benefit from Interplast's help, even though our volunteer teams can't travel to our partner countries at the moment. Interplast has found new ways to both repair bodies and rebuild lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to train clinicians throughout Nepal and other developing Asia-Pacific nations.

For more information please contact your Interplast District Chair Shefali Mehta at shefali.mehta@npdlship.com



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