GGHH Agenda Goals
- Safe, potable water

Hospital Goals
1. Have safe water using the SODIS principle

Progress Achieved
We use drinking water disinfected by the SODIS system. SODIS is an abbreviation of Solar Water Disinfection, a simple procedure to disinfect drinking water. Contaminated water is filled in a transparent PET-bottle or glass bottle and exposed to the sun for 6 hours. During this time, the UV-radiation of the sun kills diarrhoea-causing pathogens. The SODIS-method helps to prevent diarrhoea and thereby is saving lives of people. This is urgently necessary as still more than 4000 children die every day from the consequences of diarrhoea. Thereby people in the south get access to safe drinking water and can improve their health in the long term. Read more http://www.sodis.ch/index_EN

The SODIS manual is translated in Nepali language and distributed to our patients also (see below). Any patients coming to the hospital with diarrhoea are told about the system.
The Issue
The hospital is funded by Swiss NGO “Shanti Med Nepal” and private sponsorship. Environmental health and sustainability is an important factor in decisions in the development in the hospital.

Sustainability Strategy Implemented
Three issues were identified as critical to the environment and public health at the health post: solar power as the region suffers from severe power cuts; safe drinking water was essential as the local water supply is not safe to drink; and medical waste as there are no facilities for the treatment of medical waste in the region.

Implementation process
In such a small facility, the decision making and implementation process is comparatively simple. Dr Gonseth was responsible for selecting the projects to be undertaken, any necessary fundraising, identifying collaboration partners and directing implementation for all elements within GSH.

Tracking Progress
The success of the water project within the facility is measured by the fact that 10-12 staff and all the patients have safe water at no cost. The success of GSH in disseminating knowledge of the system is hard to measure. Leaflets are available but people who read them do not take them away, and it is not possible to follow up to see if they are using the system.

Challenges and lessons learned
Hospital staff did not adapt to the system readily. They complained about the time needed to fill the bottles, even though it only took a few minutes to do, and tried to pass the responsibility to others. Instead, they used healthcare facility funds to purchase treated water, although this was not permitted. It took a lot of effort to change their habits.

One challenge of changing habits in the community is that people are used to drinking contaminated water and may not see the need to change their ways.

Next Steps
A fifty bed hospital is being built nearby by the same organizations responsible for the day care center. Safe water is a priority for that facility too. The hospital will continue to educate others about the SODIS system whenever the opportunity arises.

Demographic information
Gunjaman Singh Hospital, Pithuwa-3, Chitwan, Nepal, is an independent non-profit day care centre, funded by NGOs and private donation. Gunjaman Singh Hospital has 50 – 70 patients daily and has 10 staff members (including two Nepali doctors). Mostly of the time there is also a volunteer doctor or another specialized person from Switzerland there to give trainings to the staff.

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