

## Experience of Neonatal Conference

By Shobha Nepali, RN, MCN (NIC)  
Nepal Regional Representative

**Council of  
International  
Neonatal Nurses,  
Inc.**

708 Capri Place  
Edmond, OK

PHONE:  
1.405.684.1476

E-MAIL:  
[info@coinnurses.org](mailto:info@coinnurses.org)

**We're on the Web!**  
See us at:  
[www.coinnurses.org](http://www.coinnurses.org)

At the time of having deep sleep I got in a Boeing of Royal Nepal Airlines. After four hours of travel the airplane landed on the Kuala Lumpur Airport. It was 0600 in the morning local time but in Nepal 0345, the peak sleeping hour. My eyes were burning and the head was heavy. However, there was no such resting place so I was compelled to wait on a bench till 1000. Luckily, three Nepalese students going to Sydney were met and the time passed easily. Then I traveled in Malaysia Airlines for about eight hours and reached Sydney airport, where it allowed an hour's break and headed to Brisbane. I was cleared by the customs at 2300 and waited for shuttle bus. It picked me up at 0100 and dropped at hotel Holiday Inn at 0200. Thus the journey was tiring.

However, I was excited to see the friends that were familiar and many other people, who were new to me. I was planning to go around Gold Coast in the first two free days but it rained all the time and the plan became limited to the nearby beach, which had higher tides. In the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> I was called for the reception, where I met all old friends. Some of them were academic and clinical supervisors and the others were met in the 6<sup>th</sup> International Neonatal Nursing Conference in India. I was very glad to see them and was feeling the environment homely. I also had a chance to get to know new friends: Claire, Karen, and others.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> I went to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Australian College of Neonatal Nursing, where I also presented about "Neonatal Health Care of Nepal". It showed vastly different figures that made the neonatal nurses of developed world surprised. I always wonder why the developing country like Nepal cannot think of proper training, utilizing and retaining staff even if they are interested. Instead, the government officials assign the trained staff in different area. For example, in 1990s three staffs were trained in Japanese neonatal setting. Upon their return home only one was able to practice on the neonatal care because of her access to management. The next was sent to the Tropical and Infectious Disease Hospital and the other was allocated to the Adult Surgical Ward.

The next morning I was to attend the 12<sup>th</sup> annual congress of Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand. However, when I reached the reception I came to know that I was not registered.

It was a bit surprising to me because I had filled the form and sent it twice. But I had smart friends with me so got the registration on-the-spot. I admire Linda for her quick action. Then we entered the opening session, where I saw leading women. The president of Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand was a woman (Kaye) whereas in the most of Asian countries the male doctors take the role all the time and nurses are still considered their handmaidens. More surprisingly, the Governor of Queensland addressing the opening ceremony was also a woman. My heart had swollen with pride when Dr. Kenner in the ICNN was appealing neonatal nurses to make difference around the world and Indian nurses were able to form Neonatal Nurses Association.

In all plenary and poster sessions onwards, Trudi accompanied me, which was very pleasant as well as important for me. Because teachers are highly respected in my culture, I would think during my study at Flinders University that I should not talk to her much. Although she was always nice to me and other students, I couldn't express my feelings as it was uncomfortable to me in a new setting. But this time I knew how friendly she was. She took me to the market, where we shopped and took photographs. I enjoyed that very much. I also attended a research meeting during lunch with her, which was very informative. It is interesting to note that nurses, doctors and all other health professionals are involved in research and new findings, which made me think of my country, where there is no such system of encouraging and granting fund. Instead, the initiators are considered too smart and pulled back. In fact, we have so many things to work on and bring about change.

The trade display was also remarkable to me for two reasons: the scientific and technological advance in neonatal health and sponsorship to the events. I clearly saw the good coordination between health professionals and manufacturing companies for the decision of venue and dates of the conferences. In developing countries I haven't seen much collaboration like this. Instead, the international agencies such as UNICEF and WHO support the program. Different trading companies especially Johnson and Johnson and Mater Health Services provided me with samples of their products, which I have shown to the nurses at neonatal units in Nepal. Draeger Medical had a variety of ventilators and monitors; Fisher and Paykel provided various tubing and bubble CPAP; and Parker Healthcare offered many warmers and incubators like Atom. I wish Nepal could purchase them and train the staff to save the babies' lives that reduces huge amount of neonatal mortality.

The food in both ACNN conference and PSANZ congress was excellent. I liked the variety healthy, tasty and different everyday. Congress dinner was an exceptional experience. I particularly enjoyed the masked faces and the dance that the neonatal nurse and midwife did. I also met key people such as Prof. Tudehope, who was interested in Nepal's Neonatal Health. What is more, Gillian and Karen were kind enough for my transport. Diana, Kaye and Jan always facilitated me.

It was very pleasant to be with Cheryl. However, my departure date was nearing and I found by the e-mail that the flight connecting to Kathmandu was changed, which made me upset as I had to stop in Kuala Lumpur for 24 hours. But as I informed Trudi Karen and Linda worked on it and fixed up. I then had to stay one more day in Queensland and Karen kindly agreed to keep me with her, which proved to be another great chance for me to see Brisbane.

On 24<sup>th</sup> of April Diana and her friend Elizabeth picked me up from the Hotel and drove to Brisbane via north-eastern Gold Coast, where we saw other hotels and their settings. After an hour we reached a big Shopping centre, where Diana met her son Thomas. Being a Nepalese it was surprising to me that a mother and her son bought their lunch separately. After lunch we wandered around the environs of shops and Diana assigned Thomas to take me to the city, where we could meet Karen's husband. He did his duty very well as Gavin came to pick me up. It was getting dark and I was enjoying the lights on the way. In a spectacular forest area Gavin stopped in a beautiful house surrounded by trees. I was welcomed by the fresh cold air and two lovely dogs Maya and Inca. In a few minutes of rest Karen reached home and we talked on various matters.

The next morning Karen and Gavin took me to the hills, from where the city and other sub-urban areas could be seen clearly. The forest was dense and green most like Nepal's tropical jungle. The environs were nice. We also went to city centre, where I took photos of a concrete bridge because I wanted to show my people how the bridge should be built as the new bridge over the Rew River was swept away by the flood. Karen took me to her work place: Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, which was well equipped with modern technology offering many facilities to patients and staff. After that we went to the beautiful botanical garden. The artificial beach at South Bank attracted me very much. Most interestingly, I didn't see Karen paid and wondered the ferry was free in Brisbane. In the evening Karen and Gavin took me to their lovely friends Andrea and Jason. Their two girls Alex and Sam were pretty. Karen and Gavin then drove me to the airport for my departure. I had been lucky to be in Brisbane with the couple.

The departure journey was a coincident. A smiling Malaysian lady was travelling in the same airplane in both journeys. We hadn't had chance to chat during the conference but we did in the airplane. She was a professor at Penang Medical Centre. In summary, people of Australia were really wonderful. I owe them a lot as they had given so much of their time, love, care and fun to me. Most importantly, the knowledge and skill that I could acquire from the professionals in Australia as well as other parts of the advanced world is an asset for me and my country.