

Update from Robert and Priscilla Carpenter

Dear friends and supporters,

We want to share a huge answer to many prayers over the last several years. This week we learned that we have been granted one year extensions to our visas! What a blessing from the Lord to us. In January of 2016 we received a letter from the Ministry of Interior here saying that our applications for extensions had not been “acceded” to. We really did not know what this meant, but at times after that we were told that these applications were “regretted” (a term used to say they were denied) and for the next three years we only had valid visas twice for three months each.

We now have the authorization for 1 year visas, and will be traveling to Karachi this next month to get these entered into our passports. We are praising the Lord for this. Not only were we given visa extensions, but Dr. Priscila Silva and family as well as Joanna Beeler, our nursing director also received extensions. However, we still have other colleagues who are waiting for visas. Please pray that God would sustain the workers here.

The winter is cool (about 50°F are the lows these days) and for me that is a happy thing. Unfortunately, it will not last and it will be warming up again come February. A sign of this is that local strawberries have come into the market again! My work these days never seems to finish. Each day can sometimes bring a new challenge. In the last two weeks we have had rain twice (very unusual) and rain is not a friend to our electrical system. A previous repair caused water to get into a major wire to our nurse’s hostel, and it shorted out. So that was one day’s work. Then the very next day, the door on our 30-year-old sterilizer somehow seized, and it would not open. In the end I could not open the door, and we had to bring up a repairman from Karachi. With more brute force he did get it open (he said “sometimes you have to do a bit of damage”), and it is apparently getting repaired; however, such events are generally the beginning of the end for such equipment. In the meantime, we have arranged with another local hospital to use their sterilizer and so we are having to carry things across town and use their machine when they are done for the day. These are just a couple of examples of the kinds of things that come our way. In other work I have just finished the repair and painting of a missionary apartment, and am working on a 120-foot section of security wall around one of our properties (10-foot-high brick wall).

There are two projects that we have received funding for that are in the planning stages—a staff quadraplex, and solar power. Pray for wisdom in planning and bringing these projects to life. Both will be a great benefit to the ministry here. We are still finalizing our hospital budget for this year, and it has been a challenge in that our reserve funds are continuing to decline and we are seeking to understand how to best use the funds we are receiving. However, it continues to be clear that the hospital needs additional regular support and we are seeking those who are willing to help with this. Recently some new people have taken on regular support of the hospital, and we

are thankful for this.

The court case against our chairman and hospital administrator goes on. Every hearing just sparks a future date and though we believe there is no case at all, the judge has not yet ruled to dismiss this case. The plaintiff maintains that the land which has previously been shown to be our land, is in fact his land. But the maps that do exist show that this is not the case. The judicial system here is filled with corruption so we do not know what the plaintiff might be communicating with the judge. But we do know that God is in control and his plan will not fail. Continue to pray that we will be vindicated of all these accusations.

The hospital statistics are now completed for 2018 and here they are:

OPD	14,333
UltraSound	1090
Admissions	645
Deliveries	416
Total Operations	182
C.Sections	154
Laboratory Tests	20,943

When you add the number of family and friends that visit our patients regularly, this means that thousands of people have come through Shikarpur Christian Hospital last year. Our hospital motto continues to hold for each of these people, that being, "health and hope for all". Continue to pray for us that we might, as the Apostle Paul states, "shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly the word of life" (Phil 2:15).

Gratefully,

Robert and Priscilla