A year of volunteering in Cambodia,
a family’s experience

Nikki Shelton
Radiation Oncology Medical Physicist
National Cancer Centre at Calmette
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
2002 - 2003

Long history of travel
From Bells Beach…

To Angkor Wat
Australian Volunteers Program

- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Volunteers promote positive people-to-people links between individuals, organisations, and communities in developing countries and in Australia.
ACPSEM – The Better Healthcare Foundation

• The purpose of this special interest group is to encourage and assist ACPSEM members to work with similar overseas organisations and institutions in the advancement of medical physics and engineering, especially in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

September 2016

- Team of Australian Specialists arrived for 1 week
- **APROSIG team:**
  - Dr Iain Ward, Christchurch – RO and APROSIG co-chair
  - Dr Mei Ling Yap, Sydney – RO and APROSIG co-chair
  - Dr Stephanie Corde Tehei, Sydney – medical physicist and member of APSIG, PMSF
  - Kate Rogl, Cairns - radiation therapist and future AVI volunteer
Cambodia’s National Cancer Centre at Calmette

November 2017
Set up

VARIAN – ARIA-
Eclipse –
GammaMed – PTW

• Breast
• HN
• Cervix
Managing expectations
Where we are now

- Commissioned the GECT 16 slice
- Commissioned Clinac21iX Linac for 3DCRT
- Photons
- Electrons
- Treating from end March 2018
- Substantial waiting list
Major challenges

Humidity
Language
Education
Recognition
Regulations
Collaboration
International
Funding
equipment
technical
modality
role
Laws
Uni, MP
experts
meetings,
equipment
Technical challenges
humidity
Equipment challenges
The future for the National Cancer Centre

- Staff recruitment
- Brachytherapy – Ca Cervix
- Invivo dosimetry
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} linac
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} Medical Physicist MSc - woman
- IMRT (HN) / VMAT
- Co-operation and communication b/w Medical Physicists in Cambodia
The future for the National Cancer Centre

• Establishing a cancer registry
• Improvement of clinical skills
• Establishing a culture of research
• Expand to the provinces
• Continue to strengthen the collaboration between the NCC and Australia/NZ
Family - thriving
Volunteering

• Sound challenging?
• Get scared
• Do it anyway
• Make a difference
References