



## Mini Newsletter from CandleAid Health Desk

Many are the occasions that I walk into CandleAid office and see people waiting who had come to seek help. I often notice shaven-headed children seated with their parents who stare at me with vacant eyes. They nod an acknowledgement and I reciprocate in silent gestures. These are the cancer sponsorship seekers of CandleAid who travel by bus from remote villages seeking the 2,000 rupee monthly sponsorship. It is not much to many but to them it is a lot.

They are all patients being treated in Cancer Hospitals at Maharagama, Karapitiya, Anuradhapura, Kandy and such. They travel from far for their clinic day and during long hours of waiting in corridors, in conversation with other parents or patients they hear about CandleAid and come to us for a cancer sponsorship.

We have helped more than 1,300 patients and currently help 311 of which about 150 are children. That is our story. I sincerely hope your story would be consideration and kindness. Maybe you are already a CandleAid sponsor. Thank you. Then please pass this Newsletter to some others. Cancer totally devastates families. The people who come to CandleAid seeking assistance are not Steve Jobses or George Harrisons. These are poor people who barely make ends meet in their day-to-day life and now carry the tremendous burden of facing cancer. These are not people who take a telephone call and make appointments with oncologists for a consultation, but people who hang around in government hospitals for long hours awaiting their turn to meet a doctor. The least we can do for these traumatized people is to make an attempt to help. An year's sponsorship of a cancer patient costs Rs 26,400, which includes the admin fee of 10%. US \$ 165.00 approx;

## SOME OF OUR SPONSORED PATIENTS

### Ashok Madurusinghe

**Madurusinghe** (50 years) worked as a security guard to make a living for him and his mother **Seelavathi**. She is 70 plus years old and is a very sick person. They lived in a shack in Mirihana. Madurusinghe was diagnosed with cancer and now is a resident patient at the Maharagama hospital. The mother could not survive alone and now lives in a temple near her son's cancer hospital. She has a ramshackle life which has no easy answers. They are assisted by CandleAid.



### Krishan Tharindu

**Krishan Tharindu** is a 11-year old Leukemia patient. His father, a farmer, is the sole breadwinner for a family of 7. They live in the village of Galenbindunu Wewa. The child travels a great distance with his father every week to attend the cancer clinic in Maharagama. The Clarendon Foundation from Los Angeles is sponsoring him.



### K. Piyadasa

**K. Piyadasa** is a 73-year-old ex-lorry-driver from a village near Hambantota. He suffers from abdominal cancer and has had three surgeries. His right leg is amputated from the knee due to diabetes. He has a son and two daughters and only the elder daughter helps the parents with her meagre earnings. Piyadasa is sponsored by a lady from Singapore.



In addition to the monthly cancer sponsorship program we do have two trust funds set up to help patients. R & D Fund is purely for cancer patients whilst the Sigiri Fund is for patients with other health issues. These funds have been set up through the kind generosity of two CandleAid supporters.

Iresha is a 28-year old mother of 3 children. She suffers from thyroid follicular cancer. Her husband is a daily-wage earning carpenter. Iresha is in our cancer sponsorship program. She was requested by the hospital to get a whole body Radio Iodine scan which costs rupees 18,000. If she were to get it done at the hospital, it was going to be a long wait. As the cost to get it done outside was almost an entire month's earnings of the husband Iresha sought assistance from CandleAid. The scan payment was done by Candle Aid through the R & D Fund.



13-year old Tharuka Lakshan is from Monaragala. He is a Leukemia patient. The father too is ill with dysfunctional kidneys. The doctor has ordered a MRD test for Tharuka which cannot be done in Sri Lanka. The test has to be done in India and the cost is Rs 40,000 to send the bone marrow to India. As Tharuka's father is ill he cannot earn a decent living and has to feed a family of 6. CandleAid through the Sigiri Trust Fund paid Rs 40,000 for Tharuka's MRD test which was done in India.



We do have a fair number of patients in our sponsorship program who went into remission and now they are cured and lead almost normal lives.

Dineth Piumal is from Wadduwa, and he was diagnosed in 2012 as a leukemia patient. He was sponsored by a Sri Lankan lady residing in Dubai. Dineth' father is a carpenter and his mother is un-employed. His elder brother is a university student. The family survives with an income of around Rs 20,000 and they are all so relieved that their son is now cured.



Many are the stories we hear and we associate on a daily basis with cancer patients seeking assistance. We do our best, thanks to people around the world who extend a helping hand. I will be very grateful if you forward this Newsletter to friends. It might help someone who suffers from cancer.

Among the little things we do to help people in need, we also have sponsorship programs to help students from low income families and also feeding the hungry with a program called "Gift-a-Meal."

The website [www.candleaid.org](http://www.candleaid.org) has all the details.

Thank you for reading me.

Blue skies

Capt Elmo Jayawardena

Founder/President

CandleAid Lanka