



An counseling a lady on her medications

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Seasons Greetings from Hoi An!

Thank you for your interest in our work. The Hoi An Foundation is a US-based 501(c)3 working to improve the quality of healthcare in Viet Nam. Our work centers around three areas where we feel there is great need--chronic disease management,

cardiac defects, and pediatric HIV. We have come a long way in the last 12 months with the help of many wonderful volunteers and through collaboration with local and international charities. Below is an update of our projects.

Health Improvement Project

Our Health Improvement Project is going well. In the last six months we have been travelling around to clinics in the countryside. We provide needed equipment, teach the local providers, and care directly for the sickest in the area. We have seen over 800 patients and provided them medications and education about their disease. Using cheap and effective medications, we are able to reduce blood pressures to normal, lower blood sugars in the diabetics, and manage the life-limiting symptoms of chronic respiratory disease.

After we completed this pilot program, we presented our data to the Vietnamese department of health. Our goal is to take the work we have done over the last year and expand it to cover the people in the whole province. We are now devising a plan to enact our program in the entire district. We are currently designing health education posters and brochures for all the



clinics in the area, while setting a curriculum to train the health providers in the area, including 6 symposiums in 2009 which will address major health problems in adults. We will also be bringing western trained doctors to Viet Nam regularly in the New Year to expand the education and care for patients with advanced diseases. The goal of our plan is to improve the healthcare delivery to all people in the area regardless of their income and make these changes sustainable.

*Improving the
Standard of
Healthcare in
Central Viet Nam*



One of our patients proudly showing off his hat from China



“A small gift can change a life forever”

Two of our young heart patients in Dien Ban after surgery

Please visit our website for details on specific patients and how you can help.

Our Pediatric Program has seen some nice results. We had a young lady named Dieu who had a large hole in her heart and was told it was too late for surgery. With the help from a donation by Fran and Jo Monaco we were able to get a 3 month trial of medicine in Da Nang to help lower the pressures in her heart in an effort to allow her to tolerate a surgery. She responded well to the medicine and we went ahead with the surgery. She now feels great and is back in school. We are currently looking for funding to try this medicine on another young lady with advanced heart disease.

With both our adult and pediatric heart programs we have set up a network of help that includes physicians, support groups, and sources of financial support. Children and adults who visit us with a heart condition are quickly assessed and plugged into the network. We are able to get them evaluated by the appropriate surgeons within a week and can start planning the procedure within the month. We also take time to educate the patients on the condition, expected results from surgeries, and the risks involved. With increased funding we will be able to expand this coverage area to reach some of the poorest areas out near the Laos border.

In addition to surgeries, we also find and manage a lot of non-surgical rheumatic heart disease in children. This involves starting and maintaining prophylactic medications in order to prevent progression of the disease, as well as monitoring their heart valves so we may intervene surgically if indicated. We also care for several young adults with rheumatic heart disease that has advanced beyond repair and requires palliative care. We are working to maintain a program to improve the quality of life for these patients.

Heart Program

Our new Adult Heart Program is moving forward. Though we have only completed 9 surgeries, we have 15 planned for the next six months. We have been surprised by the number of adults with life-limiting heart defects that have no access to treatment. Now that the word has spread, we have new patients travelling across the district to see us weekly and have had to turn some people away due to lack of resources. Unfortunately these surgeries are more expensive in adults and, though cheap by western standards, we don't have enough funds to help all the people who come to us.

HIV

Our pediatric HIV Program has expanded and we are currently evaluating and managing more infected children in our province. Some are very sick when we meet them and we support the families seeking treatment in Sai gon. Others are well enough to wait until the medications arrive here in central Viet Nam for treatment. Nam is an 11 year old boy we have been treating for the last 7 years. We recently moved him to Hoi An to care for him more closely. He had an accident on his bike and scraped his knee. Due to his weak immune system and his unsanitary living conditions, he developed a large infected wound on his knee. While in Hoi An, we are able to see him daily and attend to his wound. A wonderful volunteer nurse from Australia named Carmel is helping us with this. He is slowly improving and enjoying his time in the big city of Hoi An.

Critical Care

We are attending the ICU of the large public hospital in the nearby city of Da Nang. Once a week we meet the doctors and give lectures on various critical care topics. We then make rounds on the patients and perform bedside teaching. The aim is to improve both the knowledge and equipment of these doctors.



Discussions and teaching with the doctors of the Da Nang ICU

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*"Life is a gift, and it offers us the privilege, opportunity, and responsibility to give something back by becoming more."
Anthony Robbins*



Fundraising

With the increased scope of our work, we will need more funding for the upcoming year. Due to the success of our fundraiser this year in Denver, we have planned another early in 2009. We also had a great fundraiser in Los Angeles organized by Sarah Bloom with the help of Jo Benincasa, Michele Kackovic, Chris Otwell, Jimmy Nall, Stephanie Burden, and Robert Perry. Their donation will be used for one of our upcoming surgeries this month.

If you have an idea for fundraising opportunities please let us know. Small events can have a big impact on the life of someone less fortunate!



New Staff

We are happy to announce an addition to our team here in Viet Nam. Carol Nagy is a nurse from Tasmania with many years of experience working in health project management in developing countries. Her more recent experience includes working on HIV and TB management in Southeast Asia. She will join us as our in-country manager for our current projects and will implement our expanded care for children with HIV.

We also will be joined part-time by Brian Penti. Brian is a Family Medicine doctor from Boston. He works with the Global Health Primary Care Initiative based at Boston University. He will be helping manage our programs as well as be our in-country doctor.

We are happy to have both of them with us and are excited about 2009.

Hoi An Foundation would like to thank generous supporters of \$1,000 or more:

Sally Brooks, Matt Solomon, Kim and Charlotte Hogsett, Francis and Jo Monaco, Lesli Engelman, Jerry Popham, Charles Ngo, Theodore Solomon, Jess Solomon, Otto Schallner, Semester at Sea, John Church

We would also like to thank Sherry Berger for the new website and newsletter!

Gifts that Change Lives

This holiday season consider doing something different. Your precious donation can make an enormous difference in the life of someone less fortunate. You can make a donation in the name of a loved one and we will send them a letter thanking them and informing them where their money is spent.

