



*Local clinic doctor educating patients about their chronic diseases*

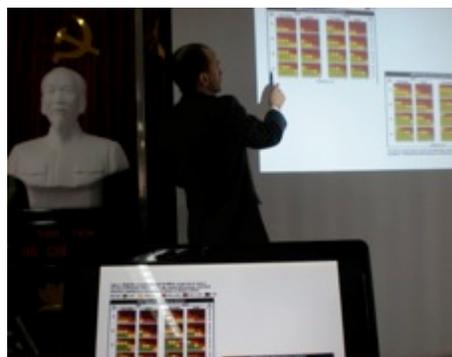
## Thank you for your interest in our work!

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 in Viet Nam-- chronic disease management, cardiac

defects, and general pediatric care, including pediatric HIV. Our work continues to progress and these newsletters serve as an update. Thank you for your support of our work.

## Chronic Disease Management Project

It has been an eventful year with exciting developments. Our chronic (non-communicable) disease management and treatment project has grown into a partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Viet Nam Ministry of Health (MoH). The WHO reports non-communicable diseases as the number one cause of death in Viet Nam. The two main illnesses we are focused on are diabetes and hypertension. Diabetes prevalence in the poor in Viet Nam is found to be around 4% of the entire population and the prevalence has increased three-fold from 1993 to 2001. The disease is largely unmanaged in the countryside. Hypertension is found in over a third of Vietnamese adults (adults make up 75% of total Vietnamese population). The management is hindered by a lack of public knowledge of the disease. Inadequate treatment results in a high incidence of stroke, heart attack, and death.



*Hoi An Foundation's Dr. Brian Pentti explaining the cardiovascular risk assessment at our symposium*

We developed a protocol for the management and treatment of diabetes and hypertension specifically for Viet Nam. We are currently undergoing a pilot project with the WHO and MoH in the province of

### In this issue

- *Chronic Disease Management and Diagnosis*
- *Pediatric Care and CHIA*
- *Adult Chronic Disease*
- *Pediatric HIV*
- *Heart Program*
- *Children's Future International in Cambodia*
- *Centura Health*

## Improving the Standard of Healthcare in Viet Nam



*Commune practitioners practice taking blood pressures*

## Chronic Disease Management Project (*cont.*)

Phu Tho in northern Viet Nam. With the help of our counterparts Dr. Duc Lai Truong from the WHO and Dr. Son from the MoH, we began the project with a symposium in January covering the management and treatment of diabetes and hypertension for the health care practitioners in two communes. By May, a refresher course was given and implementation of our protocol had begun. We have been collecting data since then, including outcomes, levels of practitioner competence and patient knowledge of their disease.

Since the beginning of the project, we have seen dramatic improvements in the patients' health and a sustained interest in managing their disease. With this success, we are expanding implementation of our pilot project to the rest of the district (approximately 21 more communes!) We have had two refresher courses of our chronic disease protocol with current commune health care practitioners and we are also training practitioners new to our project this month. We are working on final acceptance by the MoH to get our protocol included in the National Program in non-communicable disease management.



*Reviewing the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes at our symposium*

## Pediatric Care and CHIA

We are still working locally in Hoi An with Children's Hope In Action (CHIA) clinic and CHIA's Street Kids Center. At the CHIA clinic, we provide ongoing medical care to children affected by a wide array of diseases. These diseases include but are not limited to seizure disorders, cerebral palsy, congenital malformations, and blood disorders.

At the Street Kids Center, we do yearly check up assessments for the resident children and provide medical care when needed. The center houses approximately 30 children and also provides education.

For more information about CHIA's programs, please visit [www.childrenshopeinaction.org/our-programs](http://www.childrenshopeinaction.org/our-programs).



*Dr Josh Solomon and nurse Carol Nagy lancing a boil on a 3-year-old boy*

## Adult Care

Our local clinics in Hoi An are also still providing patient care to disadvantaged and disabled adults in the community. We diagnose, treat, and manage diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, cancers, thyroid disorders, respiratory disorders, functional disorders, and pain. We have seen over 4,000 patients in Central Viet Nam to date.

Through this clinic, we learned about the many congenital heart disorders, which inspired our heart program.



*Quynh measuring the blood pressure of one of our adult patients*

## Pediatric HIV

Our HIV program is still going very well. We currently have 6 children living with HIV who we support in central VN. Working through the street center in nearby Da Nang, we continue to identify new cases. Due to continued social stigmas, many families are reluctant to be contacted and often have to move to areas where they are unknown so their children can attend school. We send the children regularly to Ho Chi Minh to receive care at the HIV clinic supported by the Harvard School of Public Health AIDS Initiative (HAIVN), the US President's Emergency Plan For AIDS relief (PEPFAR) and the CDC. We are happy to have the continued support of Dr. Doanh Lu. She helps ensure our children get seen in the clinic and get started on appropriate care.

The 6 receiving care now are doing quite well. Last year we relocated a child living with HIV and his brother to an orphanage outside HCMC through the Worldwide Orphans Foundation. His parents are deceased and his grandmother was unable to care for them. He is doing very well with the support of the orphanage and the HIV clinic. He and his brother visit their grandmother several times a year through the assistance of the Hoi An Foundation. The other 5 children we take of are all doing very well, but without the supplemental support provided, these children and their families would struggle to make ends meet and the children would not receive HIV treatment in Ho Chi Minh City.



We are currently looking for family support for these children, which includes funding for trips to Ho Chi Minh City and supplemental support. They all come from poor families with sick or deceased parents. If you are interested in supporting a family please contact us.

## Heart Project

Our heart surgery project is still going strong. With the continued support of the cardiac team in Da Nang we have completed nearly 50 surgeries. Our average cost of surgery is around \$1500 and these surgeries are all thanks to our wonderful donors. The surgeries are life-changing procedures and often times keep the family together. Most of

these patients are the primary or the only wage earner of the family. They usually do not get diagnosed until they are quite advanced and often are unable to work. After their surgeries, they can return to their normal lives.

A recent case involves a 21-year-old medical student Ky Phuong Nam who had to take a sabbatical from school, due to fatigue and malaise. He came to see us in our clinic and we discovered he needed a mitral valve replacement. He was going to school through funding from the Vietnamese government, but at home he and his family are very poor. His parents are rice farmers and sometimes, they struggle because they do not have enough money to eat. He has two siblings, one in grade school and the other 18 years old. The 18-year-old recently joined a monastery in order to lessen his burden on his family. Ky Phuong Nam had a successful surgery supported by the Hoi An Foundation and he is back to school. He and his family look forward to him finishing school in order to help the family financially.

Another success story includes 46-year-old Nguyen Thi Thu Thanh. She is a farmer and is the only wage earner in her family. Her husband is sick and cannot work, so she needs to take care of him as well as 3 children at home. She came in to see us with complaints of chest pains and shortness of breath. We discovered she needed a valvuloplasty and within a few months, she received her surgery and is now back to work supporting her family.



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## Children's Future International

We enjoyed our time assisting US charity Children's Future International (CFI) in providing basic health care and training in Battambang, Cambodia. CFI's mission is to break the cycle of poverty by providing quality education and improving the well being of disadvantaged children. Our first visit to Battambang was this month. Although our trip was short, we were able to assess the children who had medical problems and gathered important medical resources for the staff at the center. Our goals with CFI are to help develop a health program through education of local staff with regular assessments by doctors recruited by HAF. We look forward to working with CFI in the future! For more information about CFI, please visit their website at:

<http://www.childrensfutureinternational.org>

## Centura Health

Last September, we had the pleasure of working with the charitable arm of Centura Health. Two teams were dispersed; one travelled to Nam Giang, a remote area in the mountainous regions of Viet Nam and the other was a surgical team who visited a local area hospital in central Viet Nam. The trip to Nam Giang was a medical mission providing basic health care to over 300 patients who have little to no access to medical treatments. The surgical team trained local area surgeons on techniques and together they performed nearly 20 general surgeries during a week's time.

## Gifts that Change Lives



If you are looking to give a gift, why not consider doing something different? 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. Your precious donation can make an enormous difference in the life of someone less fortunate.

## MANY THANKS TO...

*Dr. Duc Truong Lai and Dr. Son for their collaboration in our Chronic Disease Project.*

*Dr. Heather McKendry and Dr. Jeff Regnis for their volunteer support at the Hoi An clinic.*

*Dr. Kuon Lo and Dr. Dung Huynh for their expertise and lectures in our NCD management and treatment project.*

*Medical students Sebastian Tong, Benjamin Isakson, and nurses Jenny Brackin, Jane Healey, and Sarah Doran for their volunteer support in the Hoi An clinic.*

*Centura Health Team for their aid in medical outreach.*

*Our amazing staff on the ground and overseas including An, Quynh, Carol, and Brian for all their hard work in our foundation.*

*"The root of our happiness is not in one's self, but in the care of others."  
Unknown Author*



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