



Trinh Foundation

AUSTRALIA

Newsletter



Marie working with newly appointed TFA director, Senior lecturer Dr Alison Winkworth during her recent visit to PNT University of Medicine to lecture on the Voice and its Disorders.

**The Directors of TFA
would like to
thank all
volunteer lecturers
and clinical
educators
for their vital
contribution to the
Speech Therapy
Training Course.**

News from Course Coordinator Ms Marie Atherton

Following a very successful 1st Term of the course which saw the students attend PNTU fulltime for lectures and undertake clinical education for one afternoon per week, the students returned to their workplaces in December 2010 to resume their previous jobs and to begin implementing what they had learnt in Term 1. In December 2010, it was wonderful to be able to welcome Ms Louise Brown, Senior Lecturer and Clinical Educator from James Cook University, QLD as a volunteer to the Speech Therapy Training Program. Louise, with the support of TFA in partnership with Australian Business Volunteers arrived for a nine week stay to assist in the development and implementation of the clinical training component of the course. Hitting the ground running, she assumed responsibility for coordinating the clinicians who began arriving from Australia in December to provide clinical supervision to the students and to organise clinical

supervision and assessment of the students in their workplace, including hospitals, educational institutions and child and adult rehabilitation centres. The Directors of TFA join with me to extend thanks to Louise for the expertise, commitment and flexibility that she brought to this position.

Australian volunteer speech pathologists Jane Hepenstall private practitioner from Melbourne, Emily Armstrong from Northern NSW, Nadine Lawson from Princess Alexander Hospital, Queensland, Jeanette Cowell and Holly Daley from Westmead Children's Hospital in Sydney, Merran Peisker from Therapy ACT and Sue Woodward, a TFA director, assisted the speech therapy students in their first clinical blocks in Dec-Feb 2011. It was wonderful to be able to work with Kim Sanders, a speech pathologist from the Netherlands who is currently working in Vietnam as a volunteer with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and together with TFA I would like to extend our thanks to all, who so willingly volunteered their time and expertise.



Jane Hepenstall working as clinical educator with students at Cho Ray Hospital HCMC



Student on the course, Dr Cuong, works with a Laryngectomy patient under supervision of Clinical Educator Nadine Lawson

The feedback from these clinicians regarding their experiences of working with the students has been universally extremely positive. This is despite challenges associated with working in an unfamiliar environment, within a different culture, with limited resources and different ways of doing things. Clinicians however identified these as significant learning experiences for themselves which left positive impressions.

The Speech Therapy students have also reported thoroughly enjoying meeting and being supervised by a group of such experienced and committed speech pathologists who provided supervision and training in the areas of adult acute care and rehabilitation, voice and swallowing rehabilitation following head and neck cancer, paediatric feeding, and child speech and language.

One very tangible outcome from this first block of clinical supervision has been the ability of the HCMC Oncology Hospital to perform its first ever *insitu* voice prosthesis placement following total laryngectomy. With intensive education and training provided by Nadine Lawson and with the ongoing support of both Nadine and myself, Dr Cuong, one of the speech therapy students and also an ENT surgeon, will work with a patient to help them to independently manage their voice prosthesis and develop post laryngectomy voice. This is indeed a first for Vietnam and extremely exciting for all involved.

Over the next full time theory term at PNTU, we will welcome six volunteer lecturers from Australia who

will undertake lectures in Medical Speech Pathology (Neurology and Acute Medical patients; Paediatric Feeding; Head and Neck Cancer), Childhood Disorders of Speech, and Cleft Lip and Palate. This will be in addition to further lectures from local lecturers in Neuroanatomy and Physiology, Linguistics and Normal Speech and Language Development in Children. Staff and students alike, look forward to another busy, challenging but rewarding term ahead!

Spotlight on a Course Participant

Mrs Ha Thi Kim Yen

A Journey from Physical Therapist to Speech Therapist

My full name is Ha Thi Kim Yen. I am a graduate general physical therapist, but I began my job at Children Hospital No. 1 in 1977.

I see my biggest challenge is with children with neurological problems. Every year, there is about 1,000 new cases of Cerebral Palsy children at my hospital. Now many children with autism have become clients of speech therapy. We also work with the developmental delay, cleft palate, and children with articulation problems and hearing impairment.

For Outpatients there is more than 200 speech therapy cases / per week; For Inpatients, feeding intervention is provided regularly for newborn babies and for children with neurological impairment.

Myself and my staff are now learning how to train the children improve their communication skills and how to help children with feeding and swallowing difficulties. I am particularly interested in early

intervention and I would like to try and provide these services to preschool children.

The study of speech therapy has not yet been built up in Vietnam. I have tried to do some of the job of speech therapy, but I really recognized the need for more knowledge.

The Speech Therapy Course at Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine has helped me so much already on my journey to becoming a professional of speech therapist. By completing this course, all the disabled children will get the best chance sooner.



Mrs Yen working with a patient

A Postcard from Vietnam by Emily Armstrong

I felt I was right in amongst it on the xe om (motorbike taxi) to work: zooming around Ho Chi Minh City with a purpose, weaving and dodging, flying in the wind of the frenetic traffic. This was the vibrant, buzzing world that started my 2011 with a re-energising change of perspective. My experience as a clinical educator in Vietnam was

just what I hoped it would be: an opportunity to contribute to laying the foundations of our profession in a very different context. And, in the process, a renewal of my enthusiasm for speech therapy.

I worked in Vietnam for a month over January, supporting postgraduate students on their first clinical placements in the first speech therapy course in Vietnam (Speech Therapy Training Program at Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine). The students I supported already had professions as physiotherapists or accountants. We worked in the early intervention programme at Hue's Office of Genetic Counselling and Disabled Children, and at Children's Hospital #2 in Ho Chi Minh City.

Even in a few weeks on each placement, the speech therapy students and I were rewarded by children making significant developments and by families making changes to support their children. A little girl's voice was less husky and sore; a baby was safely positioned for mealtimes; a preschooler learned how to use his first words in sign language to ask for 'more', 'stop' and 'help'. I also helped judge the hospital karaoke championships for Tet (New Year).

Thank you to Trinh Foundation Australia and its supporters for this opportunity to work in Vietnam, and for helping me to get there. I was proud when our interpreter told me that the key word she will remember from our work together is 'empower'. "Empowering children, families, and speech therapy students to express their own potentials". Trinh Foundation is linking identified needs in Vietnam with people equipped and excited to contribute to meeting them. I believe it is this support and coordination that can make short term volunteer work productive and rewarding. So many ideas, so much to learn. I hope to return!



Miss Na from the Office of Genetic Counselling and Disabled Children in Hue learns about working with feeding difficulties and language therapy from Clinical Educator Emily Armstrong



TFA would like to express special appreciation to:

The Australian Consul-General HCMC.

TFA is the recipient of Direct Aid Program Grant. These funds will be directed towards supplying the necessary expertise and resources required for the teaching module on **Medical Speech Pathology**.

AUSCHAM Vietnam HCMC

TFA was the nominated charity to receive proceeds from Auscham's annual Australia Day function this year. The funds raised from the day will also go towards providing translators, interpreters and additional resources for the important teaching module on **Medical Speech Pathology**.

**Newcastle University Speech Pathology Students
Claire Waldron and Katrina Lim.**

TFA thanks these 4th year speech pathology students from Newcastle University. Claire and Katrina assisted Clinical educator Sue Woodward at the Dien Bien Special Education Pilot program, initiated by the Kianh Foundation in Hoi An, as well as assisted at the ENT Hospital and Children's Hospital No 1 in HCMC.

**Bowen, QLD Speech pathologists Hannah Stark
and Zanthé Lapham**

Thank you to these enthusiastic clinicians who organised and donated proceeds from raffle at a local showing of **The King's Speech**.



Marie Atherton is joined by Volunteer Clinicians Louise Brown and Emily Armstrong, and some of the enthusiastic students from the Speech Therapy Training Course to promote the work of TFA at AUSCHAM's Australia day Celebration held on Saturday January 22, 2011

Thank you to all those who continue to provide support in the form of funds, expertise and resources. This on-going support is vital to our program. For further information about how you can help us please see our website

www.trinhfoundation.org

How can you help us?
For all donations please see our website

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Trinh Foundation Australia is proud to be a partner of Global Development Group (Vietnam Speech-Language Program Project J594). GDG is an Australian Non Government Organisation [NGO] carrying out humanitarian projects with approved partners and providing aid to relieve poverty and provide long term solutions through the provision of quality aid and development projects.

For more information about Global Development Group, (ABN 57 102 400 993), visit

www.globaldevelopment.org.au