

Update

TEACHING
DENTAL
PUBLIC
HEALTH IN
CAMBODIA
LAOS AND
VIETNAM

JUNE 2009



Programs sponsored by The International College of Dentists USA Section since 1999

Photo: The new MDPH students in Laos

Masters in Dental Public Health Course opens in Vientiane, Laos

Ten students have enrolled for the Masters in Dental Public Health (MDPH) of the University of Health Sciences, Faculty of Dentistry, Vientiane Laos, which opened on May 4th 2009.

The enrolled students come from the Public Dental Service and Faculty of Dentistry in Vientiane. Geographically they represent a wide spread across the country. There are six women and four men in the class, so it is very representative of the Lao dentist population. The course is a three year part-time course, and will be taught mainly by volunteers recruited

by Health Volunteers Overseas and the American Dental Association. It is made possible by the sponsorship of the USA Section of the International College of Dentists.

Speaking at the opening ceremony the Vice Minister for Health Assoc. Prof. Eksavang Vongvichit spoke warmly of the collaboration between the University of Health Sciences, the Ministries of Health and Education, Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO), The American Dental Association (ADA) and especially the sponsors: the International College of Dentists USA Section (ICD).

The Rector of the University of Health Sciences, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Som Ock Kingsada, noted with great pride that this course is the first higher degree to be offered by the Faculty of

Dentistry, the development of which he will be watching carefully as a model for other possible courses in the University.

Professor Martin Hobdell, who represented HVO and the ADA at the opening ceremony, and who conducted the first teaching program, was presented with a letter of appreciation for HVO, the ADA and ICD, which has been duly forwarded to these

Contents:

DPH in Laos	1-2
DPH in Cambodia	3
DPH Workshop in Vietnam	4

DPH Courses statistics

Vietnam 1999-2008

Cambodia 2001-2008

Laos



	Course Enrollment	Completion	Higher Degree
1	21	21	9
2	18	18	8
3	26	23	12
1	16	16	
2	8	8	
3	No more than 10 to be enrolled		
1	10		
Total	99	98	20



Dr Sengphouvanh NGONEPHADY
Dean of Faculty of Dentistry, Laos

The enrolled students:

Dr. Douan Voraboudda
Dr. Khanthaly Symkhampha
Dr. Phonesouk Phengthlangsy
Dr. Yeng Moi
Dr. Viengkeo Kouangbounmy
Dr. Bounlnh Masopha
Dr. Latanaphone Syyaphet
Dr. Latdavanh Rajpho
Dr. Phonesavanh Seanvong
Dr. Sangvane Sayavong
Laos Master's in Dental
Public Health Course

1. Duration of course

Three years part-time divided into six semesters.

2. Degree

Master in Dental Public Health.
M.D.P.H.

3. Philosophy

Vision:

To improve the quality of dental public health services by upgrading the knowledge and skill competencies of central, provincial and district dental health managers in Dental Public Health, including also their Leadership skills.

Mission:

To provide comprehensive education as a foundation to address the problems of the dental public health system for the central level, district and provincial managers of the dental health services.

Goals:

To produce enough oral health managers so that all central level, provinces and at least 20 percent of districts have one qualified oral health manager, by the year 2020.



The family with the sick child

The Vice-Minister for Health, Assoc. Prof. Eksavang Vongvichit presents a letter of appreciation for HVO, ADA and ICD, to Professor Hobdell, watched by behind Dean Sengphouvanh and on the right the Rector of the University of Health Sciences



Laos Master's Course in Dental Public Health

Final approval for the commencement of the first ever Master's course to be taught in the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Health Sciences, Vientiane was received in March 2009. Thirty five candidates sat the entrance examination set by the Dental Faculty and, after interviewing a shortlist of candidates, ten students were finally selected.

Despite the major renovations going on in the Faculty the Dean and his staff provided an excellent temporary classroom. Once the renovations are finished a specific room for the MDPH classes will be set aside.

The initial one week program was conducted by Professor Martin Hobdell May 4 - 9. Part of the time was used to carry out a household survey of general health and oral health problems in a suburb of Vientiane not far from the main airport. This proved to be a very successful learning exercise both for the students and their teacher.

One interesting situation was encountered during the fieldwork. One of the students interviewing a family found that one of the six children in the house had not slept for a week because of bad toothache. The family was too poor to go to a dentist and there was no public clinic anywhere near their home. On field trips, like this one, for ethical reasons it is very important that when such a situation is found then the person with the acute problem should be offered help. In this case arrangements were made for the child to be seen by the nearest local dentist without cost to the family. The child is now full of smiles!

Laos Master's in Dental Public Health Course

1. Duration of course

Three years part-time divided into six semesters.

2. Degree

Master in Dental Public Health.
M.D.P.H.

3. Philosophy

Vision:

To improve the quality of dental public health services by upgrading the knowledge and skill competencies of central, provincial and district dental health managers in Dental Public Health, including also their leadership skills.



Students discuss preparations for their fieldwork

Cambodian MDPH Course

Progress in getting approval for the start of the Master's in Dental Public Health in Cambodia was much slower than anticipated. Approval from the University and Ministry of Health was received earlier this year. Now it is with the Ministry of Education who also have to agree to the curriculum. Prof Suon Phany, the Dean of the Faculty of Odonto-Stomaology, is working hard to get the Ministry of Education approval. Student selection is to begin shortly. The process for selection and the selection criteria have been set. The first course is programmed to start immediately after the FDI World Dental Congress in Singapore (September 2-5, 2009). After the planned two week program in Phnom Penh (September 7-18) the volunteer faculty will move on to Laos to teach the second part of the Master's program there (September 21-25).

The Cambodia Master's program is based on the program in Laos and not surprisingly both courses owe much to the experiences gained in teaching the earlier Diploma courses in Cambodia and Vietnam. The need to make learning by doing a priority has been consciously kept in mind as it makes learning much easier when all the teaching has to be translated from English into Lao or Khmer.

The three-year part time courses are ambitious and will challenge both students and teachers alike, but the benefits to oral health and oral health services in these countries could



On the way home from school

A few facts and figures about Cambodian oral health

A national oral health survey was carried out in 1992, but since then there have been no further national surveys. It is believed that there has been a significant rise in the prevalence of dental caries since that time, particularly amongst

urban and peri-urban children. The Ministry of Health has an Oral Health Office, staffed by 6 dentists, many of whom have studied on the Diploma in Dental Public Health Course. Two have Master's degrees in Dental Public Health

from overseas Universities. A study completed during the last Diploma course showed significant lapses in infection control in private clinics, particularly in clinics run by traditional healers

Critical Issues in health for developing countries

In the current recession countries with developed economies are importing fewer goods from poorer countries, where factories are closing.

This will, in broad terms, affect peoples' health in two main ways: first by causing people to live in less healthy ways, and second by limiting their access to health care.

Some possible examples of living in less healthy conditions: if, as seems likely, less well off families have even less money to live on, options for buying food become more limited. Cheaper and often less healthy options have to be chosen as more expensive items become unaffordable on very limited budgets.

Building work in progress at the Dental Faculty in Vientiane, Laos



The resultant diets, if taken for long enough, may directly affect health.

Cheaper and often substandard housing will have to be used instead of healthier accommodation. In the worst cases people will go hungry and live rough on the streets. Another aspect of the global recession and reducing personal incomes is the stress felt by families living on very limited means. Whilst those living on low incomes have always been under stress, the level of stress felt by those who, in the past, had had higher incomes but now have to survive on less may be even greater than those who never reached higher income levels. The stress itself may affect the immune system and or their emotional state. Both have health consequences. An impaired immune system increases vulnerability to disease. Under stress some people become aggressive and interpersonal violence may erupt resulting in facial and or dental trauma. Others may attempt to relieve their stress with the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Again there are health consequences.

With the reported increasing levels of people trafficking and the economic necessity for survival the commercial sex trade may increase with the real threat of increased levels of sexually transmitted infections and the associated social and psychological problems.

These economic pressures may also limit government spending on health and increase the migration of health workers from developing to developed countries.

A few facts and figures about Laos oral health

Oral Health Status in Laos



A national oral health survey was carried out in 1991/2,

by Dr Khamoung in Mahosot Hospital, but since then there have been none. A very small pathfinder survey, in one District, was carried out in 2005, which showed that dental caries was a significant barrier when it comes to eating and completing school work for 12-year-olds.



Dentists in Laos

There are estimated to be around 360 trained dentists in Laos. The dentist to population ratio is between 1 to 16,000-17,000. About 225 of these dentists have government appointments yet only around 44 of the 142 districts in the country have a