

Trinh Foundation Australia Limited (TFA) is an independent, voluntary, not-for-profit organisation which has been established in Australia to raise awareness of speech therapy as a profession in Vietnam and to assist in the planning and funding of formal speech therapy training courses. Speech pathology is referred to as speech therapy in Vietnam.

In developed countries, communication and swallowing disabilities occur in about 1 in 7 people at some point in the life span. With a population of over 80 million, and with the legacy of defoliants from the war and poor maternal and child health and nutrition, communication and swallowing disabilities can be expected to affect about 13 million people in Vietnam. With economic development, a growing middle class, connection to the rest of the world via the web, students going abroad to study, links with Vietnamese communities living outside Vietnam, and increasing rates of head injury and survival rates after stroke and so on, Vietnamese people are increasingly seeking speech therapy in early intervention, education and rehabilitation services. By assisting in establishing formal speech therapy education programs, TFA hopes that the Vietnamese people will be able to more effectively manage communication disabilities and swallowing disorders themselves with gradually decreasing reliance on expatriate input.



Lecturers demonstrate the procedure for conducting an Oral Muscular Assessment during the Postgraduate Short Course, February 2009.

In March 2008, members of the 'Project Boomerang' multi disciplinary cleft care team who regularly visit Vietnam: Dr Aziz Sahu-Khan (orthodontist) and Mrs. Sue Woodward (speech pathologist), facilitated a meeting between Dr Nguyen Thi Ngoc Dung, Director of the ENT Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City and Associate Professor Lindy McAllister, Speech Pathologist from the University of Queensland. A long term agenda to implement a formal Speech Therapy degree course in Vietnam was developed, the first stage of which commenced on 16 February 2009. TFA helped initiate and plan this course and raised money to fund the lecturers, clinicians and educational resources required for this Post-Graduate Speech Pathology Short Course held in conjunction with the ENT Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City.



Left to Right: Dr Peter Woodward (orthodontist) Assoc. Professor Lindy McAllister and Mrs Sue Woodward (speech pathologists), Dr Dung (Director ENT Hospital), Dr Aziz Sahu-Khan (orthodontist) and Ms Wendy Sahu-Khan (specialist nurse).

The first of two lecture blocks in Voice, Speech, Swallowing and Cleft Rehabilitation was conducted in February 2009 by Associate Professor Lindy McAllister, Dr Alison Winkworth, Dr Bernice Mathisen and Ms Janella Christie. There were 20 participants including doctors, physiotherapists and graduate nurses from across Vietnam. On 23 March 2009 clinicians Mrs Sue Woodward, Ms Marie Atherton and Ms Jacqui Frowen conducted the first of two clinical training blocks. They will return for the second clinical training block in July 2009. In order for the participants to receive a Certificate from the ENT Hospital of HCM City in Voice, Cleft and Swallowing Rehabilitation at the conclusion of the second lecture block in October 2009, students will be required to complete clinical training, assignments and successfully undertake a viva voce examination.



Visit by Australian Consul General and Vice Consul during Clinical Training Week, March 2009.

TFA is working closely with the Dr Dung, Director of the ENT Hospital and the Municipal Medical University in HCM City to assist the planning and funding of a full time two year post-graduate degree course in speech therapy proposed for commencement in 2010. Funds are needed to continue to finance this work. In particular, TFA requires funds to support a lecturer in HCM City for one-two years, in order to establish this post-graduate course and support local Vietnamese staff to sustain the course into the future. If you would like more information about the work of TFA please contact our website www.trinhfoundation.org or call Sue Woodward on 0410 553 375 or Lindy McAllister on 0417 654 757

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