

# THE NEW RECRUITS

**A report from Hannah Chroston,  
Head of Administration at All Ears Cambodia**



**A**udiometry, presbycusis, cerumen and soundwaves; words obscure and unfamiliar to our new recruits some nine months ago, have now become part of their daily language. Our eager trainees have begun their journey to become Primary Ear and Hearing Healthcare Clinicians and are showing encouraging enthusiasm for the role.

Just two of these trainees are Butny and Sreynuch, pictured above undertaking duties in AEC's clinic and on outreach. Their training this year is made possible by the support of MSAVLC.

Butny describes his experience:

*"The people we support are very poor. It is why our work is so important. Some of them live very far away in the province and don't have anywhere else to go for help. Teaching them about how to look*

*after their hearing is difficult, because sometimes they don't understand basic healthcare information, but it is very important so we take our time to discuss with them and help them to learn".*

Their theoretical training has progressed well. Core modules in anatomy and physiology, pathology and audiology have been introduced. Diagnostics skills in pure-tone audiometry are already being tested daily in the clinic. Otitis media, a common cause of hearing loss in Cambodia, is becoming more familiar to them through their clinical understanding and mentored practice.

Butny talks about the new conditions presenting every week:

*"I recently met a patient who had cholesteatoma. I had never seen this before. The senior clinician told me about this and I observed when they provided*

*treatment and gave advice to the patient. Some things I can do myself under observation already, such as practising otoscopy, basic aural toilet, and helping to fit hearing aids. I can also make ear moulds to fit to the hearing aids. However, when we see the new conditions in clinic it is great to learn from our teachers".*

Sreynuch also talked about seeing new cases such as polyps and mastoiditis. There is certainly a lot for them to learn across the two years.

Patient management skills also need to be developed. Managing a busy waiting room and learning to work quickly but effectively is important. Butny explains,

*"Sometimes when it is busy we are late to finish our work. However, if patients are still waiting and have come a long way we are happy to do it".*

Taking the patient's history is an essential preliminary step in the patient consultation, as important in some ways as the examination and treatment itself.

Sreynuch can be seen here practising



her skills in this very important task. She recalls one elderly patient who discussed how hearing loss was affecting her life.

*"She could not hear in the pagoda*

*when the monk was reciting the prayers. She would talk loudly with her friends. At night she could not sleep because of the tinnitus ringing in her ears. She was very depressed and using anxiety drugs every night to help her sleep. After having a hearing test we helped her to start using hearing aids and now she is more positive. Her quality of life is better"*.

From basic skills to integrated management, anatomical knowledge to patient care, the All Ears Cambodia curriculum leads our trainees through the requisite training to become skilled, competent primary ear and hearing healthcare clinicians.

Paediatric modules, oto-acoustic

emissions, dangerous ear disease complications and much more lies ahead. We wish our trainees luck as they move into the next semester.

Sreynuch said,

*"I want to keep learning to be a good clinician. My family comes from Siem Reap province, I want to be able to help people there who have hearing loss. It is important to me to help poor people in Cambodia"*.

Our trainee and clinical team are incredibly grateful for the encouragement and support given to them by MSAVLC. It is essential for this vital project to operate, not only supporting clinical development but also ensuring effective care for people with or at risk of hearing loss in Cambodia.

Thank you.

Hannah Chroston

# NEWS FROM DAUGHTERS OF CAMBODIA

**S**ince our report in the February Bulletin, MSAVLC have completed the funding for one year's medical assistance at Daughters, and we await a new proposal for the next 12 months. We have received a satisfactory report of the use of the funding, and all relevant accounts. Many thanks to all our supporters for their generous donations.

However, recently there have been many developments at Daughters, and a summary of their narrative report follows:

"Dear MSAVLC,

*We have had an action packed year with many changes. Much of 2015 was taken up with a series of challenges in a number of our business projects, including a fire at our Visitor Centre and moving the premises of two of our businesses. During this time, our social work, day-care and medical programs have remained stable and provided fantastic frontline services to our clients, in these critical areas.*

*On a daily basis we are helping young Cambodian girls escape the horrors of sex trafficking and start new lives of hope*



*and dignity. It is thanks to your partnership that we are able to keep achieving lasting change in the lives of so many. Thank you for helping them to have the opportunity to live new lives, with hope and a future.*

*Central to our model is promotion of clients to positions of responsibility as they progress – it works extremely well, as they make excellent peer mentors to*

*the new clients just starting, and they also have excellent skills. But even more, they have learned the necessary qualities for being great leaders. There are now 27 clients in leadership roles at Daughters. In Production there are team leaders, managers and trainers, in Social Work, trainee counsellors and in the Retail and Service Business, chefs, managers and cashiers.*

### **Our Visitor Centre**

January saw the start of a big job, and an unplanned one, moving our Visitor Centre to new premises.

In December, having renovated the centre following a fire in the cafe, our landlord gave us notice to leave. It was unwelcome news, having spent time and money on the renovations, and finding the right location was crucial for the success of our business. Our new building (321, Sisowath Quay) is perfect, and in the prime tourist area overlooking the river.

There were many challenges involved in the move, renovation and refurbishing, but we managed to open within 4 weeks of closing our old premises, thanks to the hard work of all our staff and clients.

Despite this incredible location, this year the number of visitors to Phnom Penh has dropped significantly, and the city is very quiet. We are hoping numbers will pick up in July and August.

### **Social & Medical Work**

Our social work and medical teams do critical work, supporting the clients in their very difficult family situations and many crises, health-related, psychological and social.

The Social Work Team conduct an average of 70 counselling sessions each month, and the medical team conduct around 70 medical consultations monthly.

We have now developed a partnership with an HIV/AIDS NGO, which is providing support to our clients with HIV/AIDS, motivating them to take care of their health, and giving advice on diet and medication.

Some common ailments treated in our medical clinic are diarrhoea, urinary tract infections, headaches, heat rash and various infections. Birth control is also addressed.

### **Parenting Challenges**

Daughters' clients face many domestic challenges. These include trafficking by family members, gambling, drug abuse, imprisonment of siblings and debt. Many of our clients find it difficult to raise and discipline children in a positive way, because they have not experienced a model of good parenting, and parent-child relationship challenges have led to children of clients being at higher risk of exploitation.

We have a new curriculum on childcare and protection, and our new counsellor has just started a weekly parenting training program with clients who have children.



### **Production**

For the last 9 months our production team has been focused on problem solving, to make sure we have systems that are efficient and financially sustainable. We have been over-producing and have an excess of stock in our stock room, and have decided to halt production of many items until our excess stock has sold. This is a challenge because we employ 80 girls in our sewing room and need to keep them busy and learning new skills.

To address the challenges we face, we are working on reducing over-production, reducing waste and brainstorming ideas to make us more efficient. We are having a big summer sale in the June/July high season to clear our stockpile of products.

We have also started selling to overseas buyers. One of these is Tangs Department Store on Orchard Road in Singapore, who we are thrilled to be partnering. In addition to sales, this also increases our exposure. We recently launched our kids' t-shirts range and also a range of new cards designed for us by a young fashion design student.

Thank you MSAVLC!"

## **TRAINING COURSE FOR DOCTORS**

HEDO, the Highland Education Development Organisation in Vietnam, recently contacted the Trustees to ask for funding for an obstetric course for doctors at Thai Binh University. The trainee doctors, who are drawn from the ethnic minority areas in Vietnam's Northern Highlands, are supported by HEDO, and the hope is that they will return to work in their home province, when they finish their training.

HEDO became aware that the newly-qualified doctors had not had training in obstetrics, and yet it is essential for doctors working in the mountainous provinces.

MSAVLC funded the course which took place in June 2016.

# PROJECT EXPENDITURE 2015

Month Completed	Recipient	Grants (including Bank Charges)
	<b>Highland Education Development Organisation (HEDO), Vietnam.</b>	
January	Midwives training course in Muong Cha District, Dien Bien Province.	£13,177.20
	<b>The British Friendship Hospital, Ky Anh, Vietnam.</b>	
March	Joan McMichael prize.	£357.45
	<b>New Hope Children's Home, Poipet, Cambodia.</b>	
March	Children's toys.	£154.00
	<b>Hoa Binh Peace Village, Tu Du Hospital, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.</b>	
March	Children's toys.	£90.00
	<b>New Hope Children's Home, Poipet, Cambodia.</b>	
May	Head lice combs.	£33.07
	<b>All Ears Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.</b>	
June	Funding the training of two audiology students for one year.	£11,545.60
	<b>Ky Anh Blind Association, Ky Anh, Vietnam.</b>	
June	Toothpick packing machines, air conditioners, beds, dark glasses and fans.	£1,768.45
	<b>New Hope Children's Home, Poipet, Cambodia.</b>	
June	Beds, mosquito nets, blankets, sleeping mats, storage boxes and water filter.	£2,927.54
	<b>The British Friendship Hospital, Ky Anh, Vietnam.</b>	
June	X-ray machine.	£26,109.50
	<b>Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange (VAVA), Vietnam.</b>	
June	Two hundred wheelchairs.	£12,951.33
	<b>Highland Education Development Organisation (HEDO), Vietnam.</b>	
June	Midwives Training Course in Phong Tho District, Lai Chau Province.	£6,751.30
	<b>Ha Tinh General Hospital, Vietnam.</b>	
July	Two Paediatric incubators and two phototherapy lamps.	£36,241.76
	<b>Daughters of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.</b>	
July	Counsellor training, transportation, medical expenses and support services.	£9,611.78
	<b>Thanh Xuan Peace Village, Hanoi, Vietnam.</b>	
August	Speech therapy machine and 20 children's beds.	£8,596.94
	<b>Support Lao Children, Luang Prabang, Laos.</b>	
September	Water supply and school toilet block.	£2,249.88
	<b>Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange, Ha Tinh, Vietnam.</b>	
December	Second operation for Mr Nguyen Sy Thang.	£201.18
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£132,766.98</b>

The charity's expenditure on projects in 2015 was considerably higher than the previous year. In fact it was the highest project spending that we have made in our 50-year existence. This reflects the needs identified during the Trustees' visit to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the Spring, when all our projects were evaluated, new projects were discussed and spending assessments were made.

Peter Lidgard - Chairman of the Trustees

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