

International College of Dentist
USA SECTION

Dental Humanitarian Outreach Program

January 2006 Update

Ted Roberson, Chairman

Program Objectives

Several years ago the USA Section of the International College of Dentists' Board of Regents determined that we should become more involved with programs that provided dental humanitarian support on a global basis. After considering many ideas and concepts, a project was approved that supported the training of dentists in Vietnam for a Masters degree program in dental public health. This program was conceived and directed by Dave Sampe and Jim Felix in 2001 and 2002 with the support of then USA-ICD President Dick Shick.

The outcome objective of this program for Vietnam was that many of the population were both better educated and exposed to the benefits of dental public health measures. The objectives which have been realized to date are: extended our western concept of cultural-scientific thinking to their faculty, initiated government public policy on fluoridation, promoted the use of fluorides in toothpaste, and introduced dental health as part of the curriculum in their elementary schools. After success in Vietnam, the project was expanded to Cambodia and this effort is ongoing.

Program Summary since inception in 2002

The Program has supported the training of Vietnam and Cambodian dentists in dental public health measures in these countries that have very low per capita incomes and dentist-to-population ratios. As an example, the average dentist-to-population ratio in the US is 1:1,000 whereas this ratio is 1:18,000 in Vietnam and 1:10,000 in Cambodia. A special solicitation for this program from USA-ICD Fellows was started in 2002 to provide benefits for the people of Vietnam. The success of this initial solicitation and perceived benefits resulted in the expansion of the program into Cambodia. Since 2002, USA Fellows have donated almost \$100,000 to this program, representing over 1000 contributions. The program assisted the training of 23 dentists in Vietnam and 15 in Cambodia, so far.



Program Activities in 2004/2005

The 2004/2005-year has continued to support the ongoing program in Cambodia. While this specific program started in 2003, it was delayed due to the concern about SARS. Still, 11 ADA/HVO volunteers visited the program and gave courses. Fifteen (15) Cambodian dentists completed the ICD sponsored program in 2005. Dr. Martin Hobdell who is the principal participant in the program indicated that there was great enthusiasm demonstrated by the students and they were most interested in understanding the concepts of dental public health as well as gaining new skills. The students were asked to master a great deal of information in a relatively short period of time.



During the 2004/2005 program cycle, over \$40,000 was contributed by USA Fellows, representing almost 550 contributions.

Program Future Plans

The worthiness of this program stresses the need for its continuance. For the immediate future, this same concept (training dentists about dental public health measures) will be repeated in Cambodia with another group of dentists. Next, a similar program is likely to be initiated in Laos. Perhaps in the future this program should be considered for countries in Africa, especially since one of the principal consultants (Dr. Hobdell) is not only very knowledgeable about Africa but also is highly respected on that continent.



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