

# Global Health Advocacy Elective Northern Thailand

**Dafina M. Good, MD**

Children's National Medical Center

Division of Emergency Medicine

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

George Washington University School of Medicine

# Global Health Elective



- The purpose of this elective is to teach the resident about healthcare in Thailand and the challenges of healthcare in vulnerable populations i.e.. “stateless children” (children without citizenship), victims of child sex and labor trafficking, street children, beggar children, and orphaned children as well as the “stateless” families they come from.

# Objectives



- **Residents will learn about healthcare in Thailand by**
  - Rotating through Chiang Mai University Hospital Pediatrics Department for 1week
  - Rotating at Chiang Saen Community Hospital for 3weeks
    - Resident expected to give 45min-1hr talk the last week of rotation
- **Residents will learn about the challenges and differences in University based and Rural community based healthcare in Thailand.**
- **Residents will develop and implement a project at the Volunteer's for Children Development Foundation (VCDF) site while rotating in Chiang Saen.**
  - Residents will spend every Thursdays at the children's site to work on projects.
- **Upon return to CNMC residents are expected to give talk about elective experience.**







# Chiang Mai University Hospital



- Tertiary Government funded Hospital in Northern Thailand
- Affiliated with the largest Medical School in Northern Thailand
- Known as Suan Dok Hospital or Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital
- 1800 Bed facility
- Over 400,000 Outpatient visits
- Almost 50,000 Inpatients per year
- \*This relationship is still in process\*

# Chiang Saen Hospital



- **Government hospital (Rural Community Hospital)**
  - Government pays for majority of Thai citizens healthcare costs
  - Due to location of Chiang Saen near border countries many patients from Myanmar, Laos and China visit this hospital
    - This Hospital has lost \$2million dollars providing care to non-Thai citizens
- **60 beds**
- **5 Ambulances**
- **5 Physicians (Family Practice/General Medicine)**
  - Physicians work 7 days a week, 2 Physicians overnight daily
- **40 Nurses (24hr nursing coverage)**
- **Patient volume per year (awaiting data)**
  - Inpatient
  - Ambulatory visits
- **20% of patients are Pediatrics**
- **Most Common Diseases**
  - Chronic: COPD, Diabetes Mellitus with complications
  - Acute: Diarrhea, Pneumonia, Cough (also most common diseases in Pediatric patients)
  - Out-patient: DM, cough, hypertension, chronic back pain

- **Hospital Facilities**

- Minor Surgeries (excisions, I&D's, Suturing, biopsies)
- Operating room
- Delivery room on site(500-600 deliveries per year)
- Lab onsite (cbc, lytes, LFTs, UA, malaria, dengue, lipids, HgbA1C)
- Radiology on site (simple Xrays, No CT scans)
- No ICU, No C-sections
- TB patients- isolation rooms present, DOTS program implemented
- HIV patients-
  - HIV treatment supported by the WHO Global Fund
  - 700 hospital patients are on ARVs (100 non-Thai citizens, 25 Children)
  - HIV rapid testing done within 30mins, Confirmatory testing results takes 7days

- **4-5 Thai interns rotate through per year for two months**
- **Thai nursing students also have elective training here**
- **Language barrier with many staff (the Doctors speak English)**
- **Hospital Medical Director- Dr. Ittipol Chaitha (speaks English/Thai)**



# The Site (Chiang Saen, Thailand)



## **BUDDIES ALONG THE ROADSIDE**

**Volunteers for Children Development Foundation**

**Not for Sale Thailand**

<http://www.yourbuddies.org>

<http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/projects/thailand>

# VCDF Site/Buddies Along the Roadside Not for Sale Thailand



- **Buddies Along the Roadside (VCDF Chiang Saen Site)**

- Started by Krunam, as a safe haven for children in Northern Thailand who are either victims of child sex and labor trafficking, beggar children, street children, and orphaned children.
- Home to 60-125 children at any given time.
- Many of the children are “Stateless Children” and come from the Hill tribes of Myanmar and have no recognized citizenship in Myanmar or Thailand. As a result, these children are not entitled to education or healthcare in Thailand.

- **Drop In Centers**

- VCDF has developed “Drop In Centers” for the poverty stricken families of “stateless individuals” throughout Northern Thailand, including Chiang Mai and on the Myanmar Border.
- Staff develops relationships with many of these families and they are able to get hot meals, do arts & crafts and have a place to sit and receive advice/counseling.
- Many of these women and men have opium or methamphetamine addictions, work in the sex industry or beg for money with their children.
- Many of the site children may come from these families and relationships formed by staff which prevents many of the children’s entrance into trafficking.
- The Emory team also performs health checks at the Myanmar border Drop in center annually.

# Needs of the Children

## VCDF Project Ideas



- **Growth evaluation of children**
  - Many children at the site are not growing well (<3<sup>rd</sup> percentile for age)
  - Requires more detailed Growth charting
  - Research and Discuss evaluation and management of growth deficiencies/FTT in developing countries
- **Enuresis management**
  - Many of the boys at the site (up to age 13yrs old) with nighttime enuresis.
  - Discuss evaluation and management of enuresis in developing country
- **Mental Health evaluations**
  - Few children have counseling with local counselors, one child sees a Psychiatrist.
- **Staff health modules**
  - Staff interested in learning about recognizing signs/symptoms of concerning healthcare issues and when to seek medical attention for the children.
- **Health modules for children**
  - Hygiene modules. Many of the girls with frequent hair Lice.
- **Vision testing**
  - No child wears corrective lens but handful with complaints of vision difficulty.
- **Build a Clinic**
  - Designated Infirmary/clinic building present but not properly set up for medical evaluations
  - Needs medical tables, desks, ophthalmoscope/otoscope, vitals equipment, mini refrigerator for meds etc
  - Prepare a new child entry checklist for children entering the site to prevent infectious diseases.