

# NEW ZEALAND -VIET NAM HEALTH TRUST NEWSLETTER

Patron: Dr Brian McMahon

November 2014

PO Box 2872  
Christchurch 8140

## NZVNHT Chairman's Report November 2014

Greetings from the Board of the New Zealand Vietnam Health Trust (NZVNHT), over the last 12 months we have continued to maintain an active presence in Binh Dinh province and are quietly looking to again increase the breadth and scope of our activities.

At a local level our small Board has slowly progressed a number of developments with the new website key to our communication (we'll let you know as soon as this goes live). We're very grateful to Jo Scott for picking up our membership secretary role and we anticipate we will be increasingly responsive to you all.

We have as you know been extremely fortunate to have the services of Nguyen Phuoc (formerly senior VSA administrator in Quy Nhon) as our Vietnamese agent and with his guidance have completed the newly required PACCOM arrangements that enable us to maintain our NGO activities in Vietnam. Phuoc's systematic approach and the vision and energy of Dr Hung Deputy Director of Health, Binh Dinh are driving new opportunities for the Trust to increase its level of engagement, widen the range of requested activities.

Of significance is that over the last 12 months the Trust has established an important new relationship with Claire Hall, Historian and Journalist. As many of you will be aware Claire has already written widely re New Zealand involvement in Vietnam and is now in addition to the War History widening her brief to include the Trust and other peacetime colleagues involved in Vietnam. You will enjoy Claire's segment of the newsletter and exploring her internet links.



Johan Morreau, chairman

Our major activities this year have been firstly the visit of John Dunbar and Simon McMahon, orthopaedic surgeons, who have strongly developed ties to the orthopaedic surgeons of Quy Hoa Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Hospital (formerly the Rehabilitation Hospital) and Quy Hoa Hospital. The Trust surgeons are working with their Vietnamese colleagues to grow local levels of expertise. The requested (from Quy Hoa) addition of physiotherapy colleagues and anaesthetic colleagues to this programme will enable an increasingly comprehensive package of support to be provided.

Additionally the Neonatal Paediatric Project has continued to expand its brief and is now seeing important consolidation of the Province Hospital resources, particularly at a nursing level— to the extent that the Province Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is with its family centred care now seen as something of a model for provincial Vietnam. Both are well described in our newsletter (below) and include requests from Department of Health and Quy Hoa leadership to increase our frequency of visits and support. Of particular interest is the Department of Health request for us to work together in developing a child health mortality reduction programme for the Binh Dinh highlands.

Helen Hamer has also repeated her Mental Health Programme and with colleagues has now clearly established the relevant Vietnamese based relationships to sustain this much needed work.



Anne de Bres,  
Nurse Educator

Of some recent excitement and potential is a request for us to grow a new nurse educator project. This reflects significant maturing of the local Binh Dinh and particularly Province Hospital Health system as it recognizes the current impact of a structured, planned approach to nurse education on their progress in reducing neonatal mortality and are now looking to roll this out more widely. We are very fortunate to have Anne de Bres, formerly a VSA volunteer nurse educator, as part of the neonatal project. Anne is with Vietnamese colleagues, scoping the potential and needs of this nurse educator work, the quantum of which will invariably depend on dollars raised.

It's important that I give you all a sense of where the Trust is at. In our work we are committed to honouring your and colleagues historical connections to Vietnam. Those of us engaged now are only able to do what we do because of what has gone before us. As mentioned in my report, letter in last year's newsletter my sense is that the NZVNHT relationship with Vietnam and Binh Dinh in particular is of equivalent significance to the Himalayan Trust relationship with Nepal. I'm very hopeful that if we can highlight this we can in time generate equivalent levels of support and continue to thrive.

Chairman's report continues on page 2

## Chairman's Report continued

If you have access to people with the time and skills to assist or provide access into the corporate world we'd be very happy to hear from you.

I'm really grateful to our Board, John Dunbar (Vice chairman), David Morris, Judi Smitheram, Helen Hamer for their consistent support and engagement for what has been an enjoyable year. Thanks too to our retiring Board Member Harold Neal who has contributed significantly to the activity and contributions of the Trust and will continue to take a significant interest in cervical cancer developments. We also remember with affection and have highlighted in the newsletter Mr Nguyen van Tho our Vietnamese friend and life member who passed away earlier this year.

Next year will continue to be a challenge – It's really important that we sustain our longstanding New Zealand – Binh Dinh Vietnam relationship. Please read our newsletter as well as the more detailed reports on our soon to be launched website. I think you'll find these of interest. <http://www.nzvnht.org.nz/>. Please also encourage our old friends, those with a connection to Vietnam to reacquaint and rejoin our membership.

Thanks a lot for your time in reading this.

Kind Regards

Johan (Morreau) NZVNHT Board Chairman 0274 803874

### **A Tribute to Mr Nguyễn Văn Thọ from the New Zealand Viet Nam Health Trust for his wife Mrs Nga, Family and Friends**



Mr Tho with his long time friend and Health Trust volunteer, Mr Peter Skidmore

The New Zealand Vietnam Trust and our volunteers past and present who had the privilege to work alongside Mr Tho would like to extend their deepest sympathies following his passing. Tho has been a significant and well respected man who played a key role in the support of the Trust and its members for many years. For some this extends back to first meeting during the war time.

Mr Tho was presented with a plaque in Qui Nhon (2009) to acknowledge his life membership of the Trust and to recognise his partnership and extensive input to successful projects since the inception of the Trust. Tho was extremely proud to receive this accolade.

Tho was much more than a colleague. He was an ambassador for the health service and peoples of Binh Dinh Province and offered a warm welcome to Trust volunteers, and formed a strong and lasting friendship with many of us. He had a great sense of humour that Kiwis related to and a highlight was an invitation to visit Mr and Mrs Tho in their home for food, a drink or two and a sharing of stories from their homeland and New Zealand.

Tho visited New Zealand on a number of occasions to support projects from both his expertise as a medical laboratory technologist and a superb translator. He loved our country and often spoke of bringing Mrs Tho for a visit to meet up with his many friends and show her the places he enjoyed. It was certainly a pleasure for those of us that were able to entertain and host Tho in our homes.

Mrs Tho, we can never thank you and your husband enough for the continued dedication to the joint health projects between your Province and the Trust and how you cared for us Kiwis when we were away from home in very different surroundings.

Mr Tho will be sincerely missed but great memories of him will remain with us all.

Tribute written by Dr Harold Neal

This tribute was read at Mr Tho's memorial service in Binh Dinh on behalf of the Trust.

## Orthopaedic Report 2014

The orthopaedic programme in the last two years has focussed mainly on problems of the hip and knee. A 2013 visit by four Vietnamese surgeons to New Zealand was followed this year by a visit to Quy Nhon by Health Trust surgeons, John Dunbar and Simon McMahon, and physiotherapist Jayne Dickison. The majority of the time was spent at the Rehabilitation Hospital but sessions were attended by staff from Quy Hoa National Dermatology and Leprosy Hospital and one surgeon from Province Hospital.

One of the main activities included assessment of a large number of patients with a variety of hip and knee problems. Most did not require surgery and this offered an opportunity to hold education sessions on means for managing hip and knee problems conservatively. These sessions were attended by patients, doctors, nurses and physios.

The Rehabilitation Hospital had recently acquired high quality knee arthroscopy equipment. A workshop was held to practice knee arthroscopy on plastic models and later some actual knee arthroscopies were done.

The team undertook two total hip replacements for severely disabled patients. Such operations are not likely to be commonly performed in the near future but provided a valuable opportunity to help develop systems for post operative care. It was extremely valuable having physio Jayne's input to assist with the post-operative management of these and other patients. The local staff were encouraged to pursue the concept of physios working on the ward rather than being confined to their own department and only seeing post-operative patients once they were mobile enough to attend the department.

The visiting team enjoyed excellent hospitality from the local staff and enjoyed the chance to build on established friendships and develop new ones. Mr Phuoc's contribution was outstanding and went well beyond his abilities as an interpreter.

The orthopaedic relationship is continuing with plans commencing for a return visit to Quy Nhon in 2015 by surgeons, physio and anaesthetist.

John Dunbar



John Dunbar, presenting workshop



Jayne Dickison, physiotherapy workshop



John Dunbar, assisting local surgeon Dr Viet with a knee arthroscopy

## Thank you Letter received from PACCOM

*We are very pleased to share with you that on 17th November 2014, the People's Aid Coordinating Committee (PACCOM) will be conferred the 1st grade Medal of Labor of the President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. This is a precious award given by the top leadership of the country to recognize achievements recorded by PACCOM over the last 25 years of development.*

*Since the establishment, in close cooperation with FNGOs, PACCOM has always endeavoured to find out suitable models, best practices as well as optimal methods to assist and support poor people and vulnerable groups, contributing to the improvement of the quality of their lives.*

*Taking this opportunity, we would like to express our sincere thanks and deep appreciation to YOU ALL and share with you our honour and pleasure.*

*We strongly commit to be with you on the path to the development of Viet Nam.*

*With our best regards,*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Phan Anh Son*

*Director General*

## Paediatric and Neonatal Team Visit to Quy Nhon 2014

The NZVNHT paediatric – neonatal project was established in 2001 in response to a request from the Binh Dinh Department of Health when they identified the need for support and training to improve the healthcare outcomes for infants and children, to reduce infant and neonatal mortality and long-term disability. A small team of specialist paediatricians (Johan Morreau from Rotorua, Lakes and John Doran from Taranaki) neonatal nurse (Jane Bockock from Taranaki) and nurse educator Anne de Bres (from Palmerston North) have for many years been visiting annually for two weeks to progress developments. While NZ Volunteer Service Abroad was based in Binh Dinh, nursing and midwifery initiatives were also linked and complementing the initiatives taken. The latter were key to the significant improvements in child health care achieved here.



John Doran, Claire Hall, (Oral history Project), Anne de Bres, Johan Morreau, Jane Bockock and Dr Hung

This newsletter report describes the progress of local service delivery and the activities of the New Zealand paediatric team who delivered both a two-week training course to Vietnamese child health professionals from Binh Dinh Province as well as advising senior administration re the necessary next steps, key success factors in evolving this neonatal and other child health services. The local Department of Health and senior Hospital administration, justifiably proud of developments so far have also indicated their ongoing needs and aspirations and have told us they would like us to double the frequency of visits and also with them develop an additional project focused on reducing infant mortality in the An Lao District in the Highlands. These initiatives are all possible, but will require our coopting more volunteers and acquiring meaningful supportive funding arrangements. Current funding is largely voluntary, supported by some Trust funds.



John Doran teaching at the Neonatal unit at Province Hospital

We therefore ran a number of well attended (up to 40 plus attendees from all over Binh Dinh) workshops, spent significant time at the Provincial Hospital neonatal and paediatric departments and also scoped the development of the Provincial Hospital wide Nurse Educator project which is now underway.

Training is delivered both formally and informally using a range of different teaching methods:- in workshops where both theory and practical skills are taught, at the bedside, working alongside staff or sitting round a table with a white board discussing individual cases and clinically related subjects.

These two weeks were based at Provincial Hospital, though the team did facilitate increased communication with Bong Son colleagues in particular and understand that they will plan to visit, observe and discuss with Provincial colleagues on a regular basis - intended to provide stimulus to learning that will inform care there also. At the end of each workshop decisions are made re the subject matter for the next years visit.

Of huge satisfaction to us has been the increasing active engagement of the midwives, nursing staff, paediatricians and obstetricians who participate and a strong sense that they are evolving their practise as a result of what is learnt. The family inclusive and infant centred care approaches basic to the Provincial neonatal unit care is with the increased nursing numbers that we helped advocate for translating into a sustained reduction in neonatal mortality that is likely to translate into reduced morbidity also- re attached table.

### Mortality rates re admissions to Province Hospital Newborn ICU

Provincial Hospital Neonatal Mortality Rates		
Year	% Mortality	No of Deaths / Admission
2005	13.42	100 / 745
2006	10.08	82 / 813
2007	9.98	92 / 921
2008	9.78	87 / 889
2009	7.89	83 / 1052
2010	6.63	64 / 965
2011	8.14	102 / 1253
2012	8.35	124 / 1485
2013	6.55	84/1282

## Paediatric and Neonatal Team Visit to Quy Nhon 2014 continued

It is important to note the mortality rate prior to 2008 did not include babies that were “sent home to die”. Since 2008 an additional 30% of these deaths have been recorded and are reflected in the above statistics. We have emphasized to Dr Ngon (Head Neonatal Paediatrician) and colleagues that it will become increasingly difficult to reduce mortality, that figures will start to plateau and that a comprehensive approach to maintaining quality and maternity services taking similar leadership steps are likely to be needed for these figures to continue to progress.

### Family Involvement

Family centred care is extremely important as a way of delivering a more holistic care model for sick neonates by allowing a family member to be at the bedside 24 hours per day.

We continue to observe family members providing:

- ✦ Positive reassuring touch
- ✦ Comfort or containment holding
- ✦ Skin-to-skin or ‘kangaroo’ care
- ✦ Nappy changing and washing
- ✦ Breastfeeding

Nasogastric feeding (it is a pleasure to observe the improved nutrition and therefore long term developmental wellbeing of particularly the “1000g” babies).

In addition, family provide an extra ‘pair of hands’, and as a result of close surveillance of their baby they can, and often do alert the nurse or doctor of an impending problem e.g. breathing difficulties.

Furthermore, opportunities for parents to care for their baby in hospital is very important in preparing them for when they will take their baby home, by “attaching” them to their baby and giving them confidence and practical skills in child care.

Contrary to concerns expressed by some colleagues from other hospitals, family involvement of the baby has not caused an increase in infection rates in the unit. Family inclusion may in fact be one of the factors contributing to the decrease in the mortality rate at Provincial Hospital neonatal unit, as family provide oversight at a time when there is insufficient nursing staff to provide one-on-one nursing and when access to individual monitoring equipment is not always available.



Grandmother with newborn prem baby



Province Hospital 2014

It is also heartening to hear from members of the community that they feel confident in the care and treatment that is provided in the neonatal department. Furthermore, the department continues to receive excellent feedback following monitoring visits by senior medical and nursing personnel from one of Ho Chi Minh City’s largest paediatric hospitals in Vietnam. The monitoring team have on a number of occasions now observed that the quality of care here is higher than equivalent provincial units elsewhere in Vietnam.

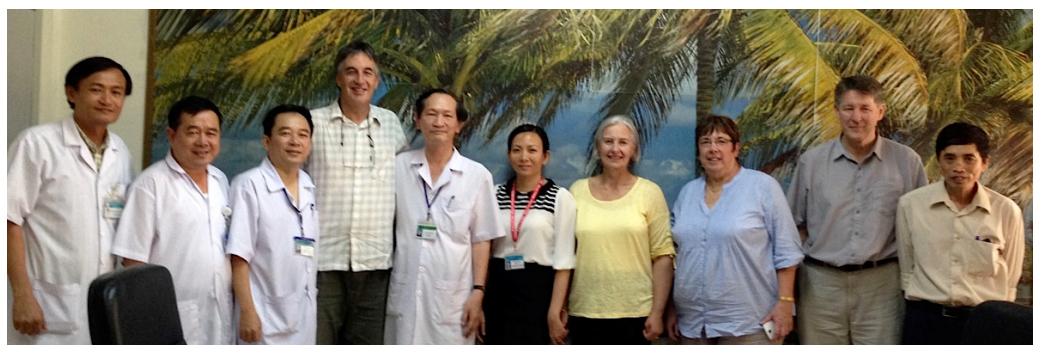
Of additional interest is that City Hospital are building (have built) a new hospital and plan to have maternity and neonatal facilities as close together as practicable which is important in facilitating cohesive and well functioning obstetric and neonatal departments. This decision follows discussions over several years between the NZ

paediatricians and City Hospital doctors with regard to optimal planning for the siting of neonatal and obstetric services in the future. We have given similar advice to the Department of Health and Province Hospital re planned developments there.

All in all a very satisfying programme and visit, but one where it is clear that there remains a lot to do and at the ongoing request of Vietnamese colleagues a need for us to sustain our education and support

Johan Morreau  
Paediatrician

Neonatal team with Province  
Hospital Leadership Team



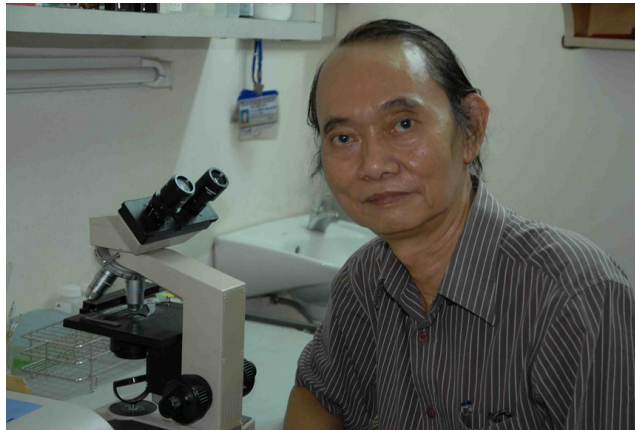
## NZVHT History Project

Over June and July historian Claire Hall and photographer Craig Ashworth spent a fortnight in Binh Dinh documenting New Zealand's long-standing involvement in the province.

Claire and Craig did this work on a voluntary basis, and our coordinator Nguyen Phuoc helped facilitate their interviewing programme. Their trip coincided with the Trust's annual training Neonatal and Paediatric visit: Johan Morreau, Anne de Bres, John Doran and Jane Bocock made up this year's contingent.

Interviews focused on relationships forged since the early 1990s by NZVHT, Volunteer Services Abroad (VSA), and the many doctors, nurses, hospital staff, interpreters and officials we collaborate with.

We are very grateful that Claire had a chance to interview our esteemed colleague Nguyen van Tho before his recent passing. We now have his memories on record, a lasting tribute to an important legacy.



Mr Nguyen van Tho in his laboratory,  
July 2014

Claire and Craig conducted around 30 audio and video interviews, and gathered dozens of photographs. These will be added to an archival collection that Claire is compiling for us.

It includes historic photographs and recordings with civilian surgical team members, and a new set of oral history interviews with past and present Trust members. We're aiming to eventually present this material in a book, and have received a small Lotteries grant to progress this work.

Claire says she and Craig were overwhelmed by the generosity and support they experienced during their time in Binh Dinh. While their interviewing focused on Trust operations in Quy Nhon, Claire also visited Bong Son.

"It was a most successful trip – both on a personal and professional basis. Not only did we exceed our aims for interviewing, we also gained a perspective on the depth and strength of the relationships - and trust –forged between New Zealand and Vietnam over many decades," Claire says.

"The scope of our interviews touched on relationships forged as far back as the 1960s, through the years of VSA's involvement in a range of initiatives, to the Health Trust's concerted efforts to continue working in Binh Dinh. Our interviews also captured the categorical desire - on both sides - for these relationships to continue."

Claire Hall  
Historian

Former People's Committee chairwoman  
and NZVHT champion Madame Binh,  
pictured with Claire Hall



## No Front Line: Inside Stories of New Zealand's Vietnam War

Claire has also presented a slice of this Trust's history in her recently published book, *No Front Line: Inside Stories of New Zealand's Vietnam War*.

Launched in August, her book made the New Zealand non-fiction bestseller list shortly after release. Based primarily on interviews recorded for the Vietnam War Oral History Project, Claire's work also draws on evidence from past and present NZVHT stalwarts.

The history of New Zealand's civilian surgical team is presented in the chapter *Medical Intervention*. Personal stories sit alongside an impressive selection of war-era photographs, creating a sense of life on and off the wards for those who volunteered their help.

A chapter on women's experiences of the war profiles nurses based in Quy Nhon between 1963 and 1975. It touches on the legacy of one pediatrician remembered and revered by New Zealanders and Vietnamese alike - Dr Margaret Neave.

A number of former civilian medics now involved with the Trust supported Claire's book launches in Wellington and Auckland. Among them were Dr David Morris and wife Lien, Dennis and Xuan Montgomery, and inaugural team leader Michael Shackleton with his wife Annabel. Trust member Anne de Bres also attended.

Dr David Morris' account of working with Margaret Neave in Quy Nhon while the pair lived at the infamous 'Pink Palace' team house features in the book. David says the book's use of oral history makes stories seam "so real."

"Hearing those voices of young New Zealanders making a choice that would then change their lives sharing in those conversations - makes it feel so immediate. And there's a great choice of photos to match the text. The chapter *Sisters at War* is quite brilliant. I'm only reading a chapter a day so that I can make the experience last longer!"

Get a taster of Claire's book, and listen to her interview with Kim Hill here:

[www.vietnamwar.govt.nz/no-front-line](http://www.vietnamwar.govt.nz/no-front-line)



Dr Margaret Neave receives the Walter Nash commemorative plaque on her return to Quy Nhon in 1990

### The Vietnam War was New Zealand's longest and most controversial military engagement of the twentieth century.

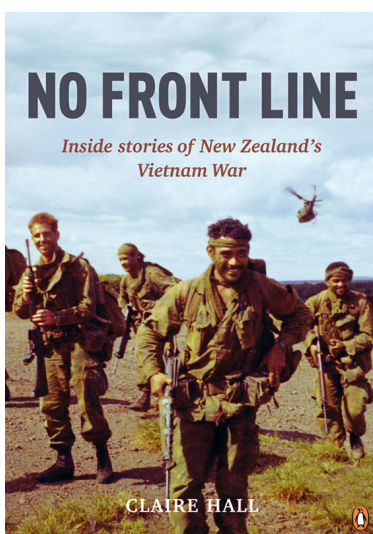
*No Front Line* explores this war like never before, from the perspective of New Zealanders who were there, in their own words: on operations, on a mission for good, on orders, or simply out for adventure. It relays military, civilian, and domestic histories in a narrative that is at once sincere, direct and undeniable – sometimes shocking and always absorbing.

These war stories take readers on operations with gunners, infantrymen, pilots and troopers who face fear and heartbreak, and who witness the devastation of a country at war.

The book includes important reflections from non-combatant engineers, medics, aid workers and administrators; it profiles civilian and service personnel treating Vietnamese casualties in provincial hospitals; it places on the record the integral role of women in Vietnam: as nurses, doctors, aid workers, journalists and entertainers. Back home in New Zealand, veterans' families recall the war's reach into the suburbs – both then and now.

Personal testimonies in *No Front Line* are drawn from a collection of 150 oral history interviews recorded over five years. They present a fresh perspective on New Zealand's collective experience of the Vietnam War – an episode in history that cannot be ignored.

— Claire Hall, *No Front Line: Inside stories of New Zealand's Vietnam War* (Penguin, 2014) is available in bookshops.



## Nurse Educator Project for Binh Dinh

My relationship with Binh Dinh began in March of 2008 when I moved to Quy Nhon to take up the position as VSA nurse educator. It was a hugely challenging role especially coming from the resource rich New Zealand healthcare system to work alongside my Vietnamese nursing colleagues in wards that were often overcrowded and under resourced.

My work took me into most clinical areas at the Province Hospital in Quy Nhon and the district hospitals in Binh Dinh as well as the Medical College where young nurses' are trained. It provided me with valuable insight, compassion and understanding of the way health care is traditionally practiced by Vietnamese doctors and nurses.

I observed nursing care that was predominately task orientated and often lacked a patient or family centric focus; the nurse-patient relationship is central to the patient experience and the quality of care is a major determinant of patient outcomes.

I responded to the challenge by putting on a Vietnamese nurses' uniform, rolling up my sleeves, and working alongside the staff. It was an important first step in developing rapport and trust with staff, patients and families. By demonstrating respect, empathy and gaining a deeper understanding of nurses' frustrations and limitations was essential before I attempted to offer any advice or help.

The 'hands on' nursing experience and the need to incorporate a holistic care model to improve patient outcomes was the catalyst for the work I did in the neonatal department at Province Hospital. By working as a nurse educator in the Unit I was able to positively influence the delivery of nursing care to the babies and demonstrate the importance of family centred care as a way to improve the outcomes for the sick and preterm infants. Senior medical and nursing staff in the neonatal department saw first-hand the way that nursing staff were increasing their knowledge and clinical skills and having excellent role models was critical in changing previous attitudes and behaviors that otherwise could impact negatively on the delivery of care to patients.



Anne teaching nurse and mother



Anne at the Med College with student nurses

In 2009 a neonatal nurse educator role was established - a first for Binh Dinh and for Vietnam.

The Trust received a request from the Dr Ho Viet My, Medical Director at Binh Dinh Provincial Hospital and Ms Nhung head nurse at Province Hospital for assistance to establish a nurse educator programme. Their request was an important acknowledgement by senior health personnel in Binh Dinh that trained nurses' are the key to improving the quality of care for all patients.

The hospital has a five year vision which is to have a structured education programme for nursing staff in all clinical departments.

The nurse educator project is supported by Dr Le Quang Hung, Deputy Director of Binh Dinh Department of Health (DoH), Dr My and senior medical and nursing leaders at Province Hospital.

After completing my work with the NZ neonatal team in June of this year, the Trust supported me to be able to extend my visit by two more weeks so that I could work with Ms Nhung and Ms Huong (deputy head nurse at province hospital) to further define the nurse educator programme and to assist them in the launch of the project to the wider senior nursing personnel in the hospital.

Dr My and Ms Huong believe the project will take five years to complete at which time the nursing office will have an established training programme for nurse educators and every department in the hospital will have an experienced nurse educator who is responsible for providing mentoring and training for new and existing staff.

Initially they plan to pilot the nurse educator project in 4-5 clinical areas for six months during which time they will monitor and evaluate before expanding into other departments. The key working party for the project will be the head nurses and nurse educators from each of the departments in the pilots, whilst the nursing office personnel will function as key facilitators.



Family centred care in the neonatal unit



The objectives for nurse educator project are:

- to provide quality education and training to new staff
- to promote quality clinical practice
- to promote health and safety knowledge and practice
- to maintain professional development

to provide clear and accurate communication to staff and family

The additional two weeks I spent in Quy Nhon provided the opportunity to learn more about the nursing vision for the project over the next five years, meet staff who will be involved in the pilots. At the request of the nursing division I also run two training workshops on the 'role of the nurse educator' for department head nurses, senior nurses and newly appointed nurse educators.

Another development was the involvement of nursing staff from the Quy Hoa National Leprosy Dermatology Hospital who also came to the two training workshops. Dr Nguyen Tan, the Medical Director of Quy Hoa is very supportive for the nurses to increase their knowledge and skills for approximately 435 patients requiring wound and disability care management and education. Dr Tan is hugely supportive of the nurse educator project and has requested support from the Trust to work with his staff to establish a similar programme at Quy Hoa. In the same way as Dr My from Province, Dr Tan



Anne teaching on urology ward

believes that nurses have an important role to play in all clinical disciplines; to address the problem of insufficient number of trained nurses the focus must be on quality nurse leadership and nurse education.

The collaboration between the medical and nursing leaders from both hospitals was very positive with excellent group discussions among the nurses during the workshops. Both teams have agreed to work together to share ideas to assist them in developing a structured education programme for nursing staff in the future.

The nurse educator role is still a new concept in Vietnam. The Binh Dinh DoH, Province Hospital, Quy Hoa Hospital together with NZVNHT have the opportunity of leading the development in education for nurses' by developing a template on the 'role of nurse educator' that could be



Anne working in neurology with staff & family adopted elsewhere in Vietnam.

Lastly I would like to thank the Trust for the opportunity to provide support and ongoing mentoring to Vietnamese nursing colleagues in Quy Nhon who are committed to fostering nursing education in order to improve patient care. I would also like to thank Ms Binh and Ms Hien for their superb translation skills, friendship and always ensuring I am safe and well.

Anne de Bres  
Clinical Nurse Educator



Miss Hien, translator



Working with family and staff



Ms Huang, Deputy Head Nurse at Province Hospital and first neonatal nurse educator



Family centred care

## Changes made in Neonatal Care in Binh Dinh Province – a Nurse’s perspective

A chance remark from the late Dr Alan Parsons back in 2000 led me to become a volunteer for the New Zealand Viet Nam Health Trust and to my first visit to Quy Nhon in 2001. I have made ten further visits since then.

Over the years I have seen many changes in neonatal care. In 2001, care in the poorly resourced neonatal unit was task oriented and medically driven. Today you will find a dedicated neonatal team of nurses, under the leadership of the head nurse, working alongside the doctors and all supporting the families in caring for the babies.

Change has occurred over years because of the desire to improve neonatal care and the development of relationships between NZVHT, Binh Dinh Department of Health (DOH) and the medical and nursing teams throughout the province.

There have been significant improvements in basic neonatal nursing. Neonatal resuscitation, temperature regulation, fluids and nutrition, care of the jaundiced baby and developmentally supportive care continue to be the topics of our education and training – to both doctors and nurses. With the huge input by Anne de Bres during her two years as a VSA nurse educator, the neonatal nurses’ approach to how they care for the babies and the inclusion of families in the care has led to the calm neonatal unit that you have today. The babies are relaxed and settled. There is a team spirit between doctors and nurses – and the family. Babies are surviving as Dr Nhon’s statistics demonstrate. Our regular visits that provide ongoing education through workshops, informal teaching sessions and case reviews also makes us part of the wider team.

In November 2013, the Taranaki Daily News published an article about my contribution to the Neonatal Project. Following on from this I received several invitations to speak to various groups and talk about the work we do. I have spoken to Inner Wheel, Soroptomists and the Taranaki Anglican Ladies Fellowship – speaking to 50 to 80 people at any one time. I have received a total of \$500 in donations for the Trust, to support our continued work in Vietnam.

What do I talk about? I find they want to hear, and see (I do a pictorial talk) where we go, how we live whilst there, what the hospitals are like, who we work with and what we do. And so I give them a talk about how we have made significant changes in neonatal care over the years, but change is slow and has only been made because the desire has come from within Vietnam, and that there are motivated people in the medical and nursing leadership roles – all supported by the hospitals and the Department of Health. I start with a picture of a baby in 2001 and end with a picture of a baby in 2013 – this clearly demonstrates how conditions and care have changed.

Jane Bocoock

RGON, BN, MN, PGCert (Neonatal Nsg).



Nurse Jane Bocoock and Neonatal nurse



2001



2001—Old Neonatal Unit



2014



2014—Family Centred Care



If your group or organisation would like a guest speaker from the Trust to present an informative, inspiring and entertaining message about our work. Please contact Jo Scott, Membership Secretary. We have volunteers throughout the country who can be available.

## Training Nurses and Psychiatrists at a Psychiatric Hospital in Quy Nhon

Since 2007 I have completed four visits to support my project to progress the clinical and professional development of the psychiatric nurses and psychiatrist at the Regional Benh Vien Tam Than psychiatric hospital. The hospital currently has 130 beds with approximately four psychiatrists and 32 nurses.

The psychiatric nurses in this particular province have had no specialist education by mental health nurses in their two year nursing training and only a small number of nurses have gained a nursing degree. Therefore the programme of teaching has focused on the fundamental skills of psychiatric/mental health nursing, increasing their knowledge and understanding of common psychiatric conditions and enhancing their clinical skills.

A range of fundamental skills were taught, for example communication skills; risk assessment; working with suicidal patients; common medical and nursing diagnoses; assessment and formulation and basic nursing care planning. The content of the programme was delivered in short seminars, using case presentations and role play practice, combined with clinical consultation and skills demonstration on the wards.



Patient interview with psychiatrist



Tutorial with nurses

Because the family members are a constant during the person's stay, an emphasis was also placed on how the nurses can support the family members to gain an understanding of the illness experience, the early warning signs and recognition of their loved one's relapse signature.

I have promoted the 'train the trainer' model by focusing on the practice development of eight of the senior nurses to coach the less experienced nurses in their teams. The teaching and clinical practice development in this project continues to be very successful and the recent visit in June 2014 was further supported by the input of my colleagues (Simon Hatcher, a psychiatrist and Julie Campbell, a psychologist) from Ottawa, Canada.

Helen Hamer  
Nurse Consultant (Mental Health)

### Introducing Jo Scott, Membership Secretary

Introducing Jo Scott, our new Membership Secretary. Jo's background is administration with local government and the health sector. Jo's aim is to increase the financial membership of our Trust so it can become sustainable into the future.

If you are interested in joining our Trust as a member please do not hesitate to contact Jo at [office@nzvnht.org.nz](mailto:office@nzvnht.org.nz) or by sending the attached registration form (on last page) to Jo. We look forward to having you on board and your contribution will be much appreciated.



Jo Scott

### Planned activities for 2015

We need you now! Our volunteers and donors have brought these projects to reality, but we need your help to keep them sustainable. Join us in supporting these immediate projects for 2015:

**Neonatal and Paediatric  
Nurse Trainer and Educator  
Orthopaedic, combined with physiotherapy and anaesthesia**

**Psychiatric and Mental Health Education  
Women's Pre Cancer Screening**

Your donation assists the auxiliary staff to participate in these projects, thus the provision of a broad range of support which ensures we are able to offer the holistic approach which encourages the ultimate ability for positive change to be affected.

Our sincere thanks are extended to the doctors who have donated their time and expertise to the projects, as well as funding themselves and other project costs. Whilst this is greatly appreciated it is not sustainable for the long term, this is why we need your assistance with funding and sponsorship. We ask you to let others know about the work of the Trust and our newsletter is great way to let others know about the fantastic opportunities that the Trust is providing to change the well-being of those in Binh Dinh. If you need further copies please send us an email.

**Monday 15th December**

**8.00pm**

This will be a Skype meeting utilising centres in Dunedin, Auckland and Christchurch.

If you would like to join from one of these hubs, or from your home address if outside these areas, please make contact with the Trust to register your interest and Skype contact address with the Judi by Friday 12th December to: office@nzvnht.org.nz

If you would like a role in the Trust and/or make a contribution on the Board (specific skills of IT, administration, financial and fundraising welcome), please contact office@nzvnht.org.nz



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**THE TRUST BOARD 2013-2014**

**Chairman: Johan Morreau**

**Board Members: David Morris, Harold Neal, Helen Hamer, John Dunbar, Jo Scott (co-opt) and Judi Smitheram (co-opt)**

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**TO ALL SUPPORTERS OF THE NEW ZEALAND—VIET NAM HEALTH TRUST**

Subscriptions for membership are payable now.

Annual subscription (July 14 —June 15)	\$10.00
Donation to NZVNHT (all <i>donations</i> of \$5 and over are eligible for a <i>tax credit</i> )	\$ _____
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

Receipt required Yes / No (Delete one)

Have we got your name and address right? If not, please amend your details so that we can get it right in future.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to receive newsletter by email Yes / No

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward with payment to the:

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY  
C/- 56B OTONGA ROAD,  
ROTORUA 3015

Donations and subscriptions can be made by internet banking to the account of NZ Viet Nam Health Trust

ANZ 01 0797 0001245 02 (Please clearly identify your name for membership details and donations)