

# Improving Rural Health Initiative – A Lao PDR and University of Calgary Collaboration

Fall 2015 – Issue 2

*“Strengthen the Lao University Health Sciences capacity to improve the economic and health status of Laos through reform of health human resources training”*



Some of the 150 Family Medicine Specialist Graduates at the 2015 Centralized Educational Forum in Vientiane

The University of Calgary (UC) Faculty of Medicine and the Lao University of Health Sciences (UHS) have collaborated to develop a **Family Medicine Specialist (FMS)** training program. The goal is to train doctors who practice family medicine in remote and rural regions of Laos. Over 70% of the 150 graduates of this program currently work in isolated regions of Laos where access to medical care is limited.

Continuing medical education, mentoring and peer support are essential for these dedicated physicians working in remote areas. The University of Calgary **Improving Rural Health Initiative** supports an annual **Centralized Educational Forum (CME)** to give the Lao Family Medicine physicians the opportunity to:

- Update their knowledge and skills on various medical topics
- Share experiences and challenges with their peers
- Receive learning and teaching resources

University of Calgary physician medical educators support this yearly event, donating their time and travel expenses.

A **Textbook of Family Medicine** was distributed to the FMS graduates at the CME event in October this year. The textbook, the first of its kind, was written in Lao language and authored by 22 Lao FMS graduates. This three-year project was also supported by the UC **Improving Rural Health Initiative** through leadership and financial aid for publication costs.

UC Faculty of Medicine members also support FMS graduates working in small district hospitals through on-site visits and co-development of educational material and training events.

## Collaborative Teaching Laos UHS & UC

Support is needed to fund the Lao FMS Centralized Educational Forum. Funds are used to provide travel, accommodation, and educational resources for the Lao FMS physicians, ensuring they can all attend.

**Charitable Registration #10810 2864 RR0001**  
Donations can be made at [www.laoshealth.org](http://www.laoshealth.org)  
Or by mail to:

University of Calgary, Undergraduate Medical  
Education Office HSC 3330 Hospital Drive NW,  
Calgary, AB, T2N 1N4

Please make cheque payable to

**University of Calgary**

**Reference Faculty of Medicine Lao Project**



FMS Graduates receiving Textbooks  
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