

The Project Khon Kaen team, with our partners from the physiotherapy department of Khon Kaen University, and the staff and children of Sri Sangwan School after a day of playing games

FROM THE HEART



# Developing Rural Healthcare

By Project Khon Kaen

Project Khon Kaen 2012 is an initiative pioneered by the National University of Singapore (NUS) Medical Society, in collaboration with Healthcare Expeditions International and the Singapore Medical Society, London (SMSL).

The pioneer trip, made in May 2011, found a very good match between what we could offer and what was lacking in Khon Kaen, a city in the northeastern region of Thailand – health screening services. Thus in May 2012, we hope to not only continue the work we have done so far, but to also expand our reach into Chum Phae, a district within Khon Kaen itself, which consists of 147 villages.

We have identified some needy communities there and intend to conduct health screening services in partnership with the following organisations: the Health Department of Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen University and Campus Crusade for Christ in Thailand. Currently, the health department screens all school-going children yearly for growth, hair lice, and eye and ear health, and also conducts general physical check-ups. However, due to manpower shortages, the children can only be screened once every three to four years. We hope to augment the current system, by providing a more robust and regular screening process which is crucial in a child's growing years.

Our primary target community is the children of Kaen Thong Orphanage, situated in the city of Khon Kaen. The orphanage houses an estimated 300 children aged between 0 to 5 years. Children with detected health conditions and cases at risk will be brought to the attention of the health department, who will take further action. Accompanying

doctors will aid in the screening process as well as manage acute conditions. Follow-ups will also be made for the children screened last year. Additionally, a new initiative implemented this year is a training programme which will be conducted for the orphanage staff, to empower them with skills to appropriately manage emergency cases and care for ill children.

This year, we will be expanding our project to include two village schools in Chum Phae, which is 87 km west of Khon Kaen city and a 1 hour 40 minute drive away. We will be working closely with the Thai Ministry of Education to perform health screenings at these two village schools, for the students of these schools and also the villagers in the villages that the schools are located in. Each village is small, with an approximate population of 100 adults and 70 children.

We are currently looking for doctors to join our team for our trip in May 2012, in particular, doctors who specialise in treating children, paediatricians or otherwise. The dates of our trip are given below, and interested parties have the option of participating in 1) the entire trip, 2) the village segment, or 3) the orphanage segment.

The dates of our trip are:

- Entire trip (Chum Phae villages and Kaen Thong Orphanage): 20 May 2012 - 31 May 2012
- Village segment (Chum Phae villages): 20 May 2012 - 26 May 2012
- Orphanage segment (Kaen Thong Orphanage): 27 May 2012 - 31 May 2012

For more information, please email our project directors Zhuan Yi and Judith at [projectkhonkaen2012@gmail.com](mailto:projectkhonkaen2012@gmail.com). **SMA**

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