During 2011 a number of education and training programmes have been undertaken to improve the delivery of radiotherapy in Viêt Nam.

In October 2010 the Việt Nam Atomic Energy Institute (VNEI) requested Học Mãi to develop training programmes for Radiation Therapy Technologists (RTTs), Radiation Oncology Medical Physicists (ROMPs) and Nuclear Medicine Technologists (NMTs). A Scoping Visit to assess the current status of training was undertaken in March 2011 by a Học Mãi team that included Radiation Therapy Technologists, Radiation Oncology Medical Physicists and Nuclear Medicine Technologists. The team visited 9 departments of Radiation Oncology in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Ha Noi over a two week period. On the final day a Forum with 40 attendees was held in Ha Noi to further discuss the concepts involved in training. A report with input from the team was later forwarded to the VAEI, although to date no action has been forthcoming - probably as it was suggested that on completion of training the successful trainees would become eligible for registration and undertake CPD.

In November 2011 a Học Mãi team of Radiation Therapy Technologists visited Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Ha Noi over a 10 day period for Workshops and in-hospital training. The visit was a huge success as it was the first time that training had emphasised the essential role of Radiation Therapy Technologists in delivery of accurate, safe and effective radiotherapy. As a separate initiative, Học Mãi also funded a visit by two Radiation Therapy Technologists from K Hospital, Hà Nội to Sydney for 6 weeks from early November.

The continuing education of Radiation Therapy Technologists has also been enhanced by visits to Viêt Nam by Australian trained Radiation Therapy Technologists arranged through the AujAID AWD Programme (Australian Volunteers for International Development) with Học Mãi and the APO - Australian Partner Organisation. The Radiation Therapy Technologists have been (a) Ian Lynch - retied RTT from Hobart (12 months in Hà Nội from March 2011), (b) Aime Thompson - RTT from RNSH (3 months in Hanoi from September 2011) and (c) Vu Huynh - RTT from Perth (12 months in HCM City from January 2012).

Prof Philip Tyule (Director at Nepean Hospital Radiation Oncology) has kindly donated an X-ray Simulator (used in planning patients before treatment) to Học Mãi and arrangements are in hand for this to be installed at Can Tho Oncology Hospital, Mekong Delta in early 2012.

As the Ministry of Health has announced plans to install an additional 60 linear accelerators in Viêt Nam by 2020, the further efforts by Học Mãi to enhance the education and training of all personnel involved in radiotherapy (including Radiation Oncology Technologists) will be required for several more years.

In early September 2011, the Macarthur Cancer Therapy Centre's Radiation Therapy team were approached by Học Mãi Australia Viêt Nam Medical Foundation to host two Viêt Namese Radiation Therapists, Mr Dao Quoc Huy and Mr Bui Huy Khoi from Viêt Nam, to come and learn more about our department processes and procedures in radiotherapy.

Huy and Khoi spent three weeks in early November 2011 focussing on all aspects of radiotherapy treatment and planning in order to maximise their learning benefits and implement some of our work practices to provide better care to their patients when they return home to Viêt Nam.

Huy and Khoi had to deal with many cultural and language differences, but were extremely grateful and appreciated their time and the support given at Macarthur Cancer Therapy.

Our Radiation Therapy team were delighted to have participated in their training and are extremely supportive of what Học Mãi has provided in regards to training and providing care in Radiotherapy in Viêt Nam.

I went Sydney in summertime; it was so nice like the people who live there. Even only a 6 week fellowship, but it was an interesting period of time for me. During this time I have learned a lot technique about radiation therapy treatment practice from clinical placements with my supervisor Carol in Campbelltown Hospital and Lyndal in PPRA and all staff there.

It helped me open my mind with huge radiation therapy knowledge, that I’m sure is very useful for me and my hospital K in Hà Nội. Outside hospital, I also spent weekend time to travel and discover many places in Sydney.

Huy and Khoi, are now back in the workforce here at K1 Hospital, and I am impressed with the Radiation Therapy knowledge they have picked up on during their 6 week Scholarship in Sydney. It has certainly opened a ‘new world’ for them and they are keen to share their experiences with their peers. It has been a very worthwhile venture for the recognition of Radiation Therapy Technologists in Viêt Nam, and the role they play in Cancer Treatment Services.

I wish to thank you Học Mãi Foundation for giving me a chance to get some new awareness in Australian health care, and I strongly thank Dr Graeme Morgan. I also thank to Ms Rhondah Glasson, Mr Jason Dibbs, and every staff in Campbelltown and RPA Hospitals, who helped me in Sydney.

Six weeks passed so quickly but leave me unforgettable memory. I remembered the blue sky and lovely waves in Manly beach, Sydney Opera House, the wonderful Harbour Bridge, and the people they are so friendly, and enthusiasts. The most special thing is Australian food, I never forget enjoying a BBQ with lamb steak and prawn.

I would like to thank you Học Mãi Foundation for giving me a chance to get some new awareness in Australian health care, and I strongly thank Dr Graeme Morgan. I also thank to Ms Rhondah Glasson, Mr Jason Dibbs, and every staff in Campbelltown and RPA Hospitals, who helped me in Sydney.

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