A story from your Global Ministries | JULY 2012

“Cast your burden on the Lord and God will sustain you.”

Psalms 22:55a

Sharing the Burden, Lightening the Load

I was invited to visit the 800 bed general hospital in Long An province, Vietnam. Long An is a two hour drive from HCM city (Saigon) Vietnam. One of the senior social workers there had been awarded a scholarship to study social work with me fifteen years ago, and her work at the hospital was excellent, yet had not been recognized nor affirmed as helpful. With a new decision by the country’s Minister of Health affirming that the social work profession should be coordinated within the health sector, the hospital administration gave her permission to invite me to visit. The social worker and I conducted a needs assessment and worked with the hospital administration and doctors to develop a social work plan for the future. It was the first time this had ever happened in this hospital, maybe most hospitals in Vietnam.

The doctors, nurses and hospital staff wanted to have more cooperation between the medical and social work fields; to learn to better assist the patients, families and the community; to lessen the pain and anxiety of the patients; and reduce the stress of the medical staff. This large request was addressed first in a small way. One day, four of our Social Work students drove on two motorbikes for three hours to reach Long An Hospital. We set up a computer for a social work room, a library of social work books, and prepared a trolley full of toys, picture books, games, doctors’ play uniforms, musical instruments, puppets crayons, coloring books etc. When a doctor, nurse or cleaning person passed by, they first wondered what was happening then smiled to see our efforts. I just wanted to use this as an example of how the social work staff could lessen the children's boredom, the worries of parents, and bring some laughter, and smiles to the patients who have nothing to do after the doctor’s daily check-up.

Let us pray together for the healing of children and the lightening of worries by hospital staff.

Global Ministries missionary Xuyen Dangers trains social work students as interns in Donkoi Children Development Center, Laos.

You make the difference...

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