

Report on the visit to the HIV center and family with child living with HIV in Da Nang city

Meeting with the directors and 3 staff of the HIV center

The HIV center has 25 staff working at departments of (1) prevention, awareness raising and health education; (2) Laboratory; (3) Counseling and treatment; (4) case management; (5) data management and supervision on trend; (6) Finance and planning; and (7) management board. Beside the awareness raising on HIV problems and screening new cases, the center has been regularly providing counseling and medical care for 2,020 people living with HIV. Currently, 350 HIV-infected patients are receiving anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment at the centre. The HIV center is now taking care of 11 children living with HIV and 110 children affected by HIV (their parents passed away because of HIV/AIDS).



In 2016, the center found 122 new HIV-infected cases. The HIV center reported that over 40% of Da Nang's HIV patients are from outside the city, for whom the drug-addiction is a main transmission factors. Every year, the HIV centre works with relevant local agencies to conduct screening tests for the early detection of HIV infections for early treatment/interventions. In addition, various meaningful community programmes have been carried out, focusing on homosexuals, detoxified drug addicts, street prostitutes, and service staff at local entertainment venues. In addition, a total of 15,000 pregnant women have been screened for the early detection of HIV infections. Thanks to this, 7 cases have been diagnosed with the disease and all have received treatment to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Since 2017, all the funding from NGOs has ended. Fortunately, VNHIP started its supporting for the HIV center for long-term project from 2017 to 2021. That will make sure a sustainable and long-term impact to the improvement of life of children affected by HIV problems.

The HIV center has been paying attention to prevention and medication. However, the center realizes that other aspects of life such as education, life-skills, vocational training, jobs, English skill, and other social skill are important for the children to get a better life in their future. Therefore, the HIV center is happy to work with VNHIP and Foundation Hulza to develop and implement the training on life-skill development for children affected by HIV in Da Nang. The training will be for two years, however VNHIP and HIV center will continue supporting the children for longer term. The staff of the HIV center have some experiences in supporting the children living with HIV. However, they didn't have enough skill at training on life-skill for the children. They need support from VNHIP's experts and more training.

Every year, the HIV center collects small gifts from local charity groups to organize two events (children day in 1st of June, and mid-autumn event with dragon dance in August). However, the donations are too little. It is costly to do fundraising in Vietnam, therefore the HIV center doesn't have a plan to raise more funding. VNHIP and Foundation Hulza would consider contributing to the events.

VNHIP and HIV center will do the need assessment of every child living with HIV to identify what would the child living with HIV need to build up their life. VNHIP and HIV center will share the result of that assessment to Foundation Hulza for further possible cooperation.

Visiting the family with child living with HIV

We visited Quynh, the child living with HIV and his family in the central city of Da Nang. From the HIV center it took us 10 minutes to get to Quynh's house.

Quy is 12 years old boy. He is at the grade 6 at the local secondary school. He is a smart and skinny boy. His favorite subjects in the school are Art and Mathematics. He is trying to study very hard and well at school, because he doesn't want to disappoint his parents. He receives good care from his mother despite of many challenges in their life. There are four members in Quynh's family, the mom, dad, older brother and him. They rent a small house in the Danang city.

Quynh was infected with HIV when he was born because his parents are HIV positive. Fortunately, his older brother is not infected with HIV.

Quynh's mother is a tailor and works in the industrial zone in Da Nang. It is told that Quynh's father became infected with HIV due to unsafe sexual relationship with a sexual worker. Currently, he is working far from home in Gia Lai province – in the highland of Viet Nam. Every month, he comes back to Da Nang to get ARV medicine and gives his wife some money.



Quynh's parents decided to keep his HIV problem in secret. They are scared that the teachers and his classmates will prevent him from going to school. He was taught about how to take care of himself and protect his friends and his older brother from his disease. But they do not know some how some neighbours and teachers at the school know their disease. And finally that news became a bad reputation and stick to Quynh's family.

When we talked to them, the mom burst into tears and she hold Quynh's hand tightly. She shared that she often dreams to be healthy always so that she and her husband can earn for a living and raise the children in a better condition. More than that, owning a small stable house to stay in the future is their big wish.

It would be good if Quynh has better studying condition such as a table, chair, etc. We will make a plan to support Quynh for long term, so that he would be able to make his dream come true.