



2/2014

Trip Report
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Laos

Laos has 6.5 million people with one third of the population living on a wage below \$1.25 per day. The SIGN Program was started by Tom Vasileff, M.D. in February 2012. During his initial visit he was assisted in teaching the SIGN Technique by Dr. Duong Bunn, SIGN Program Manager from Cambodia. Dr. Vasileff has returned approximately every six months to work with the SIGN surgeons in Laos. He has become a good friend.

In January, Jeanne and I accompanied Dr. Vasileff to Laos after visiting Vietnam. We were very impressed with Dr. Vasileff, the SIGN surgeons and surgical staff in Mittaphab Hospital. They were efficient, confident and had the best interest of the patients in mind. A surgeon from Pakse and one from Luang Pabang, the two other large cities in Laos, came and assisted us in surgery. They were very eager to learn the SIGN Technique. After our visit, the surgeon from Chamkpasak Provincial Hospital in Pakse and Dr. Vasileff traveled there to start a new program.

We are able to evaluate the results of SIGN Surgery through the surgical reports submitted to the database. 322 patients have been submitted from Mittaphab Hospital in Vientianne and 14 very well done SIGN Surgeries have been reported from Champasak. We salute Dr. Vasileff and Dr. Duong Bunn as they played a big role in helping 336 patients to walk again using the SIGN IM Nail.

SIGN is spreading in Laos as the surgeon from Luang Prabang is very anxious to begin a SIGN Program. On this trip we once again experienced the joy of participating in SIGN Surgery, interfacing with the surgeons and seeing patients walk who might not have had the chance but for the SIGN Surgery.