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Medical workers attend a workshop on nursing management.

Workshop gives shot in the arm to nursing management

Times Reporters

Nursing leaders from the Ministry of Health and central hospitals in Vientiane are meeting for discussions on nursing management, aiming to raise standards in the profession.

Some 70 representatives from Mahosot, Setthathirath, Mittaphab, Mother and Child Health, and Children's hospitals and the Ministry of Health are taking part in the two-day Workshop on Nursing Management, which began yesterday at Mahosot Hospital.

Participants are learning

about nursing management methods in Japan and discussing how they can be applied to the nursing services offered at Laos' central hospitals. They are also considering how to implement the guidelines suggested for the scope of nursing practice in Japan.

An expert on nursing management from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Nursing Director of the National Centre for Global Health and Medicine in Tokyo, Ms Chie Asanuma, explained the nursing management systems used in

Japan.

The workshop was presided over by the Deputy Director General of the Education and Research Department of the Ministry of Health, Dr Somchanh Xaysida, and Ms Mayumi Hashimoto from JICA's Project for Sustainable Development of Human Resources for Health to Improve Mother, Neonatal and Child Health Services.

The workshop is expected to improve nursing services at Laos' main hospitals and further contribute to positive health outcomes.

Laos praised as good...

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members. They felt Laos had set a fine example in hosting an international sporting event.

"They asked for a video copy of the games because of the way we organised things," he said, adding that the Asean University Games Council also thought Laos had done an excellent job of hosting the event.

Prof. Dr Soukkongseng said the games organising committee was very proud of the way the event had played out.

He said the games had taken place amid a cheerful atmosphere since the opening on December 12. There had been

no reports of security issues at any of the competition venues, the Athletes Village or any of the hotels and guesthouses where overseas athletes were staying.

"One of the best aspects of the event has been the good security we've been able to provide," he said, adding that the athletes had also been singing and dancing at receptions held at the Athletes Village every night.

"I would really like the media to capture the atmosphere at the Athletes Village on film – it's been wonderful to see everyone singing and dancing so happily."

Prof. Dr Soukkongseng

said the organising committee appreciated the efforts of Lao students in winning so many gold medals at an international event. "We've already got 29 gold medals, many more than our initial target of 10."

"This is truly a great achievement, but it would not have been possible without the participation of all the parties involved," he said.

On behalf of the games organising committee, he thanked the Party and government, companies and the general public for their help in enabling the committee to host the event so successfully.

Health officials inspect gift baskets

Xayxana Leukai

The Vientiane Health Department has advised district health offices to inspect all gift baskets to make sure they don't contain food items that are out of date.

Deputy Director of the department, Dr Phonepaseuth Ounaphom, said yesterday that medical staff from the department have already spent two weeks inspecting goods at supermarkets and mini-marts to make sure that vendors sell only safe products.

"We do this work early because vendors will have more time to ensure only good quality products are used for gift baskets," he said, adding that if medical staff inspected later, they may not be able to read the expiry date of the products because they would already be wrapped up in the basket.

"We want to encourage all vendors to be ethical and not

to sell products that could be harmful to consumers' health. That would be against the law."

To avoid any potential problem, the public is advised to ask vendors to make up a new basket of gifts instead of buying a pre-packed gift set, especially where canned products are concerned. They can then choose the products themselves before asking for them to be packed.

Officials cannot penalise vendors for selling expired products if there is no proof of expiry. Dr Phonepaseuth advised shoppers to ask for a receipt whenever they buy gift baskets. The receipt should list all the products that were purchased.

The receipt could be used to bring charges against vendors found to be contravening regulations. Gift baskets usually contain coffee, snacks and sweet foods of various kinds. If these products have passed their expiry date, they could be harmful to

people's health. Any food item that has undergone a change in appearance should be avoided.

The public can inform the department if they see any shops selling out-of-date products. "We have a law in place to control irresponsible vendors," Dr Phonepaseuth said.

The inspections will continue on a regular basis to encourage vendors to sell only safe products. "If we don't check products regularly, vendors may be tempted to consider only their personal benefit instead of the health of their customers."

People who contravene the regulations will be educated on the subject after a first offence. Following a repeat offence they will be fined. The department may then order the business to close if the infringement continues. If their actions result in a person's death, the vendor will be punished under criminal law.

Association promotes benefits for autistics in Laos



Ms Viengsam Soinxay (centre) speaks at the meeting in Vientiane yesterday.

Bounfaeng Phaymanivong

The Association for Autism (AFA) is working to identify an appropriate translation of the word 'autism' in the Lao language to enable the general public, parents and society to better understand those living with this condition.

At the annual meeting of the AFA yesterday, association President Ms Viengsam Soinxay reported that the association was established in 2011 after the Ministry of Home Affairs provided a temporary letter of approval.

"At present we have 44 permanent members and another two supportive members from the provinces and Vientiane. AFA also directs the Vientiane Centre for Autism, which has 22 students and 13 teachers," she said.

The Australian Agency for

International Development (AusAID) has given grants to the association through Catholic Relief Services so that it can expand and develop effectively.

"AFA plays a significant role in sharing ideas, lessons learned and experiences gained with organisations that are working with autism in and out of the country," Ms Viengsam said.

The association has four main goals: the promotion of advancement and education for autistic people and their parents; promoting the understanding of autism; educating experts and teachers on autism; and sharing experiences between members and the relevant sectors.

"We rely on assistance from foreign teachers to help with special education for autism and some Lao teachers are taking short term courses. We are

coordinating with the Ministry of Education and Sports and foreign institutes, especially in Thailand," Ms Viengsam said.

For 2012-20, the association has set seven important development goals. It aims to strengthen the association; raise public awareness and understanding of autism; build capacity for parents and supervisors in supporting autistics; provide services to autistics; cooperate with medical specialists; cooperate with special education experts; and expand cooperation at the national, regional and global levels.

Honorary President of the Asean Autism Network and advisor to AFA, Mr Noy Indavong, government representatives, parents, supervisors, invited guests and foreign advisors were present at the meeting.

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