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Media release:

Lao pediatricians receives support from MMG LXML Sepon

MMG LXML Sepon has renewed its agreement with the NGO Health Frontiers to provide funding for an annual conference of Lao pediatricians.

The agreement was signed on February 16th, 2011 at Health Frontiers office in Vientiane. Every year for the next five years, AUD \$10,000 (US \$10,100 at current exchange rates) will be provided for the conference. The main objective of this assistance is to build human resource capacity in order to improve health care services.

The annual conference is a forum for Lao pediatricians from across the country to meet, share experiences and update their knowledge and skills. The participants are then able to share this new knowledge with other Lao doctors who treat children. The training is coordinated by with the Royal Melbourne Hospital in Australia.

"We have already provided more than US\$30,000 in financial support to Health Frontiers over the last five years," said Mr. Saman Aneka, Director of MMG LXML Sepon. "We are committed to supporting initiatives that benefit Lao society," he said.

Other health related initiatives supported by MMG LXML Sepon include new hospital buildings in Vilabouly district (where the mine is located) along with medical equipment and an ambulance.

Health Frontiers has worked in the Lao PDR since 1991, running a post-graduate training program for pediatricians and other medical staff. To date, 57 Lao pediatricians have graduated from the Health Frontiers supported program. Those pediatricians are now working in teaching hospitals in Vientiane and throughout the country. In addition, there are 18 pediatricians currently in training, with six new graduates and six new residents each year.

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Dr Phouvieng Duangdala is the only pediatrician in Luang Namtha Provincial Hospital in Laos who has joined the Continuing Medical Education (CME).

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