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I-THRIVE

20 SEPTEMBER 2018 - 19 SEPTEMBER 2021 | IMPLEMENTER: CCIHP |
PLANNED BUDGET: \$ 1,999,880

People, especially children under 16, living with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) require a range of services from different healthcare professionals. In Vietnam, these services are often not available due to a shortage of specialists in occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and to a lesser extent, physiotherapy. In addition, collaboration between therapists and professionals from different disciplines, for example pediatricians and psychologists, can be weak and there is a lack of guidance to support their work. I-Thrive will address these challenges by enhancing the skills of therapists, developing inter-disciplinary teamwork, fostering parent-mediated interventions, and producing national guidelines, thus helping children with IDD to reach their full potential. I-Thrive will be implemented in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam provinces in partnership with Vietnam's Ministry of Health (MOH), the Medical Committee of Netherlands and Vietnam, and other partners.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR REHABILITATION SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

The project will train rehabilitation professionals in provincial and district hospitals, support the establishment of transition houses in at least three provincial hospitals, and provide rehabilitation equipment to 18 district hospitals to enable clinical service delivery. Transition houses help persons with disabilities to practice their daily living functions so that they can fully integrate themselves into society and lead an independent life.

DEVELOPING INTERDISCIPLINARY SERVICES AND FOSTERING PARENT MEDIATED INTERVENTIONS

Interdisciplinary rehabilitation services will be provided to adults and children with disabilities, including those who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. For children with disabilities, the project will train parents to provide care and support for their children, through a mix of personal coaching, online counselling, and video tutorials provided through a web-based platform. Gender sensitivity and prevention of gender-based violence against children with disabilities will be integrated into these services.

STRENGTHENING NATIONAL GUIDELINES

Studies will be jointly undertaken by national and international researchers to examine the effectiveness of intervention models and lessons learned. I-Thrive will utilize this evidence and work together with MOH and the National Hospital of Pediatrics to enhance technical guidelines on the early identification of and interventions for children with IDD/autism and using interdisciplinary rehabilitation teams.

EXPECTED RESULTS

It is estimated that 20,000 children will be screened for IDD as part of routine health checks in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam provinces. Hospitals in these provinces are expected to provide inter-disciplinary rehabilitation services to nearly 1,200 persons with disabilities and at least 800 children living with IDD. Their families will also benefit from clinic-based services and parent mediated interventions. Additionally, two guidelines on rehabilitation and care for children living with IDD will be issued.

Photo: An Occupational Therapist trains a father to undertake interventions with his son
Credited: Tran Hoa Mai