

## Medical services set to improve with e-system

**Times Reporters**

Staff at the Mother and Child Health Hospital are confident that an e-learning and training course, supported by the Swiss Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, will prove to be a valuable tool in improving medical services around the country.

The training course was launched yesterday as a pilot project, giving doctors, nurses and medical students the opportunity to use the internet to connect to the RAFT telemedicine network and learn from medical experts in Geneva, Switzerland.

Swiss Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research representative Dr Yanick-M.Ebinger said the objective of the programme is to improve the medical skills and experience of Lao doctors and nurses, especially those working in rural areas.

“In addition, doctors and nurses can seek advice on various treatments from other doctors and professors through the network,” he said. The pilot project will run for six months and then expand to other hospitals around the country if it proves a success.

Director General of the Curative Medicine Department at the Ministry of Health, Professor Dr Sommone Phounsavath, thanked the foundation for its support and said the system would directly benefit Lao people.

He proposed that the

Mother and Child Health Hospital expand the system to hospitals in Borikhamxay, Xieng Khuang and Huaphan provinces, as these facilities already collaborate with the hospital as assigned by the ministry.

The hospitals are located in Khamkeut district of Borikhamxay, Kham district of Xieng Khuang and Xamtay district of Huaphan province.

“It should be expanded if it succeeds,” Dr Sommone said. “I believe the number of people seeking treatment at those hospitals would increase if people knew that doctors and nurses there could use the network to directly contact the central hospital in Vientiane.”

The network would prove particularly useful for the hospital in Xamtay district which is very difficult to access during the wet season, meaning patients often can't be transferred to other facilities.

The Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research is a non-profit organisation established in 2002.

The foundation is supported by the Department of Health of the Canton of Geneva, the Department of Social Affairs of the City of Geneva, the Faculty of Medicine at Geneva University, and the Geneva Medical Association. It works in close collaboration with the World Health Organisation. The foundation is a WHO Collaborating Centre in Education and Research in Human Reproduction.