

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH BY THE FRENCH SOCIETY OF HAND THERAPY

From: Dominique Thomas, Past President French Society of Hand Therapy

Since the 1980's the French Society of Hand Therapy has been helping other countries develop Hand Therapy through workshops and professional exchanges in Italy, Spain, Poland, Czech Republic, and Romania as well as teaching/humanitarian missions in developing countries such as Mauritania, Southern Morocco, Madagascar, Mongolia, and Vietnam. Great care is taken to work side by side with the local therapists and associate teaching with relevant clinical cases. For splinting, locally available materials are used rather than thermoplastic materials. The price of one sheet of thermoplastic material often represents more than one month's salary!!

In more than six visits to Vietnam we have taught and worked in various HO CHI MINH CITY area hospitals, supported by the South Vietnamese National Health Service. Vietnamese surgeons and therapists have spent time in France obtaining additional training. Since 2003 we have been 10 times to ULLAAN BAATAR Hospital in Mongolia. Due to the way of life in the Mongol "GER" (tent) along with the harsh climate, burns and frostbite injuries are frequent. Post injury complications are common and serious due to a lack of knowledge of basic treatment principles and limited economic means. Patients were left in an antalgic "comfort" position in nar-

row beds. Priority was given to skin healing with no active or passive range of motion. Splinting was unknown.

Our long term goal is to help upgrade the care by forming a local multidisciplinary team to appropriately follow a burn patient from first care through rehabilitation. This requires an extensive collaboration and education over several years as well as provision of surgical and rehabilitation equipment. The task before us is huge.



French Delegation in Mongolia



Dominique Thomas with Mongolian Orthopaedic Surgeons



Roma Bhopal, incoming president, jokes with Nicole Grünert-Plüss, outgoing president, at EURO HAND

EFSSH MEETS IN LAUSANNE

Lausanne, Switzerland provided a sunny venue for EUROHAND 2008, the joint meeting of the European Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy (EFSHT) and Federation of European Societies for Surgery of the Hand (FESSH) June 19-21, 2008. More than 400 therapists were part of the 1500 total attendees. In addition to the 15 member societies of EFSHT, therapists attended from Australia, Bulgaria, Iran, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, South Africa, and U.S. This meeting was the most expanded EFSHT program to date, with four sessions running simultaneously. In addition to a joint session for therapists and surgeons, speakers from each discipline presented to the other discipline.

IMPORTANT DATES for IFSHT 2010 CONGRESS

Call for Abstracts: available July 1, 2009
Abstract Submission Deadline: October 1, 2009.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Note: Listing of upcoming courses sponsored by member countries does not indicate IFSHT endorsement.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
Dec 18-20, 2008	SFRM (with French Society for Surgery of the Hand)	Paris, France	www.reeducation-main.com
Mar 26-27, 2009	Swedish Annual Meeting	Malmö, Sweden	www.sfh.nu
Sept 2-9, 2009	ASHT Annual Meeting	San Francisco, California	www.asht.org
Oct/Nov, 2009	AHTA Annual Meeting	Queensland, Australia	www.ahta2009.com
Nov 13-15, 2009	APFSHT Meeting (Asia Pacific Federation of Societies for Hand Therapists)	Kaohsiung, Taiwan	www.2009apfsht.ot.org.tw