

## **REPORT**

### **Visit to the School of Pharmacy, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences (MNUMS), Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia by Herman Woerdenbag, 6-10 February 2018**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of my visit is to help the School of Pharmacy of the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences (MNUMS) (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia) with the revision and improvement of the Pharmacy curriculum (introduction of the PharmD programme). This work is sponsored by The Dutch foundation Farmacie Mondiaal.

#### **Contact persons and partners in the project in Ulaanbaatar**

Mrs. Zuzaan Zulzaga, MSc.Pharm, chair Association of Mongolian Pharmaceutical Professionals (AMPP) and National consultant on medicines regulation at ADB technical assistance project

Mr. D. Davaadavgva, PhD, Dean School of Pharmacy MNUMS

Mrs. Erdenetuya Myagmarsuren, MD, PhD, Department of Clinical Pharmacy MNUMS

#### **Visa**

Initially I attempted to obtain the required visa for Mongolia via de Mongolian Embassy in Brussels (Belgium). However, they refused to grant the visa because they considered it to be a business visa for which more was required than just a completed form and a photograph. After three weeks my passport was returned without visa. To overcome this problem an official letter from the Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was arranged by Mrs. Zulzaga Zuzaan and Mrs. Myagmarsuren Erdenetuya in which it was stated that I could obtain a visa (class A) upon arrival at Chinggis Khan International Airport.

As a valid visa for Mongolia is required for Dutch citizens prior to departure, I informed at KLM whether having only an official letter from the Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would not cause a problem at check-in for the flight. They answered that it would be okay if I could show the letter then. So I did, at Schiphol International Airport (Amsterdam) and at Sheremetyevo International Airport (Moscow), and there were no hurdles. At Chinggis Khan International Airport I received the visa quickly and without problem. Costs for the visa and processing were USD 50.

#### **Flights**

The flights, AMS-SVO-ULN (6/7 Feb.) and ULN-SVO-AMS (10 Feb.), were booked from Aeroflot. AMS-SVO was carried out by KLM. Flights were good with a short lay-over at Sheremetyevo.

#### **Day 1 in UB, Wednesday 7 February 2018**

I was picked up from the airport by Dr. U. Enkhbaatar, lecturer. He brought me to the Springs Hotel in Ulaanbaatar where I had time to fresh up. It was around 9 am when I arrived at the hotel. Around noon I was invited for lunch in Maggiana Restaurant, close to the Springs Hotel and to Sukhbaatar Square. I was heartily welcomed by Mrs. Zuzaan Zulzaga, Dr. Davaadavgva and Mrs. Muhkhasan. We discussed the programme for my stay in Ulaanbaatar.

In the afternoon I had a meeting with Mrs. Zulzaga. She explained to me the plans and wishes of MNUMS School of Pharmacy to start a PharmD programme (master) of 1.5 years to complement the current bachelor programme of Pharmacy (5 years). We also discussed possibilities to train professional pharmacists, in order to keep their knowledge up-to-date. I showed her the Pharmacy programme of the University of Groningen. I explained the importance of the '2016 Pharmacy Competency Framework and Domain-Specific Frame of Reference for the Netherlands' in determining the role of the pharmacist in practice, in defining the specific pharmaceutical domains and competencies of a pharmacist and in formulating the learning outcome of course units and the study programme as a whole. We visited at Centre of Health Development and met with Mr. Bayarsaikhan, officer in-charge of health professionals Post Graduate Training (PGT) and exchanged information about Pharmacy Competency and new regulation of PGT. At the end of the afternoon we visited a community pharmacy.

### **Day 2 in UB, Thursday 8 February 2018**

I was picked up from the hotel by Dr. Enkhbaatar and brought to the School of Pharmacy. We started with a short meeting with Dr. Davaadagva, Dr. Enkhbaatar and Mrs. Suvd Nadmid. The meeting was an introduction to each other and an introduction to the programme of my visit. This was followed by a tour along the various departments of the School of Pharmacy, currently counting around 500 students. I saw laboratories, lecture rooms, a chamber dedicated to Mongolian traditional medicine and the tour ended with a visit to the production unit used for teaching purposes.

I gave two presentations for the staff (around 25 persons attended): 'Pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Groningen: research and education' and 'Teaching methodologies and assessments in pharmacy education'. The Pharmacy curriculum at the University of Groningen (UG) was shown as an example of a contemporary, accredited programme. In the Dutch curriculum the learning outcomes of the PharmD programme are based on the required competences of a pharmacist in practice. This approach was also shortly presented. There was good interaction with a lively discussion and many questions were asked.

There was unfortunately no time for two other presentations I had prepared: 'Pharmacy curriculum design in relation to the pharmacist's profile in practice' and 'Quality assurance in pharmacy teaching'. The translations from English into Mongolian and vice versa that were needed were rather time consuming. All presentations (also the two I did not present) were made available for the attendees.

Lunch was offered in The Grand Khaan Irish pub, where I enjoyed khuushuur. Here, we further talked about developing the pharmacy curriculum.

At 3 pm I delivered a presentation 'Pharmaceutical compounding in the Netherlands' for Mongolian pharmacists. Although only first class community pharmacy (nowadays reducing, only few community pharmacies have pharmacy preparation) and hospital pharmacy have compounding in Mongolia, the overall 'quality thinking' was considered useful for the audience. My sheets were translated into Mongolian and presented. Further translation was offered by Mrs. Suvd.

At 5 pm we (Mrs. Zuzaan, Mrs. Mukhhasan and I) went to the centre of Ulaanbaatar, walked around at Sukhbaatar Square and had a drink. At 7 pm we went for an impressive performance of traditional Mongolian music by the Mongolian Philharmonic Orchestra.

### **Day 3 in UB, Friday 9 February 2018**

In the morning we had an extensive discussion with Mrs. Zuzaan Zulzaga and Dr. Erdenetuya Myagmarsuren (Tuya) about the future PharmD programme. My hosts presented an overview of the bachelor programme of Pharmacy (5 years) and explained the plans to start a PharmD (master) programme (1.5 years). We also paid attention to possibilities for post-academic training for professional pharmacists. Based on our discussion and exchange of ideas I compiled a list with recommendations, which will be the topic for further collaboration and interaction. We also talked about possibilities for future collaboration and support from the UG. The UG offers a bachelor programme in Pharmacy with a major Medical Pharmaceutical Sciences followed by a master in Medical Pharmaceutical Sciences. These programs are taught in the English language and open for international students. In addition, the UG offers possibilities for a PhD program in pharmaceutical sciences. These programs are well suited for capacity building of staff of the School of Pharmacy of MNUMS. Attempts to acquire scholarships should be made towards the Mongolian government.

After lunch in the Grand Khaan Irish pub I returned to the hotel. In the evening Dr. Davaadagva, Mrs. Zuzaan Zulzaga and Dr. Erdenetuya Myagmarsuren invited me for a dinner for thankfulness at the Shangri-La hotel.

Saturday early in the morning Dr. Davaadagva and Mrs. Zulzaga brought me to the airport for my trip back home.

### **Outlook**

I consider my visit to Ulaanbaatar a successful step in the establishment of a sustainable relationship between Farmacie Mondiaal, the School of Pharmacy of the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences (MNUMS), 'Mongolian pharmacy' and the University of Groningen. I will be available in the future for further help and advice and I am most happy to be partner in the project with Mongolia.

### **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank the colleagues of the School of Pharmacy (MNUMS) in Ulaanbaatar for their kind hospitality and open minded discussions.

Herman Woerdenbag,  
February 2018.

Dr. H.J. (Herman) Woerdenbag  
Programme director Bachelor Pharmacy  
Senior lecturer Department of Pharmaceutical Technology and Biopharmacy

University of Groningen, the Netherlands  
h.j.woerdenbag@rug.nl