

Thai delegation visits ITM

Thai delegation visits ITM to strengthen academic, research and capacity building cooperation

20-01-20



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Today, a delegation from Thailand visits the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) in Antwerp to affirm and evolve their longstanding academic cooperation. In addition, both parties will look at possible collaborations in the field of public health research.

A delegation of four Thai scientists, including two ITM alumni, from the government official and the health sector, visits the Institute on Monday 20 January. The delegates will meet ITM's academic coordinators and talk with the Thai students currently studying at the Institute. In addition, they will receive a brief introduction to health systems and policies, sexual and reproductive health, tropical non-communicable and infectious diseases. At the end of the visit, both parties will sign a Memorandum of Understanding in which they reaffirm their joint commitment. The fact that the Thai government is prepared to co-finance the trainings of their health professionals through public funds points out the high regard it holds regarding ITM's education programme.

"ITM and the Thai government want further improvement of the expertise of Thai health professionals and give them the opportunity to specialise through the wide range of public health courses that are offered at ITM. Both parties want to encourage Thai researchers to obtain a PhD, where they conduct their research partly at ITM and partly in a Thai research institution. They would also like to explore ways to expand their research cooperation. Thanks to this visit, the excellent reputation ITM holds within the Thai ministry of Health is built upon even further," says Professor Bart Criel, who is closely involved in ITM's collaboration with Thailand.

For more than 30 years, the Institute has worked closely with the Thai public health authorities. Together they created and introduced the concept and the practice of a multidisciplinary, accessible and patient-oriented primary health care system in Thailand with a focus on Universal Health Coverage. This cooperation was continued through investment in human capital and has encouraged health professionals to specialise at ITM. With this visit, ITM and the Thai government explore ways to broaden their cooperation.