



ANNUAL REPORT

VG-CARE

2025

Vietnamese-German Center for Medical
Research, Hanoi, Vietnam



Universitätsklinikum
Tübingen

2025 MARKS A DEFINING STEP IN VG-CARE'S EVOLUTION, AS IT HAS MATURED INTO A TRUSTED REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR EPIDEMIC PREPAREDNESS, TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH, AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING ACROSS ASEAN AND BEYOND.

VG-CARE's strength lies in its people: scientists, clinicians, trainees, and partners united by a shared commitment to equitable science and regional ownership. As global health governance continues to evolve, we remain guided by a simple principle: sustainable impact built on trust, transparency, and unity of purpose.

We sincerely thank our partners for their continued confidence and collaboration, and we look ahead with determination, responsibility, and optimism.

DIRECTORS' WELCOME



Prof. Dr. Le Huu SONG



Prof. Dr. Thiru. P. VELAVAN



Prof. Dr. Le Huu SONG



Prof. Dr. Thiru. P. VELAVAN

Watch our VG-CARE Annual Review 2025 Video

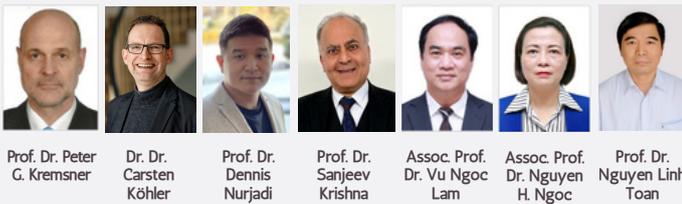


OUR STRUCTURE

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- Dr. Nghiem Xuan Hoan
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- Dr. Le Thi Van
- Dr. Do Van Dong

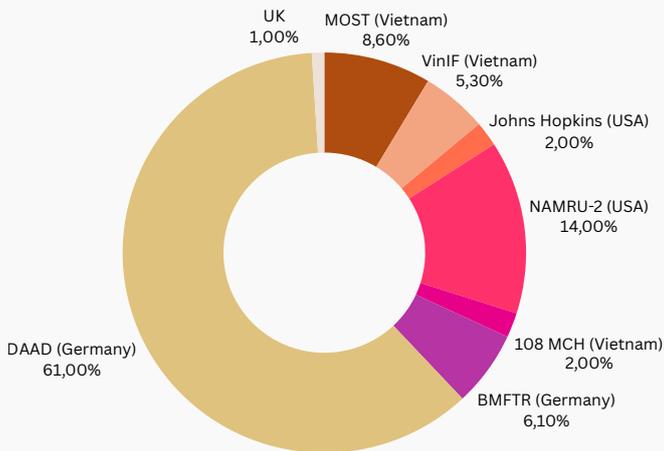
VG-CARE operates with a transparent and robust governance structure comprising two Directors, nine Research Group Leaders, a Scientific Advisory Board, and an independent Scientific Review Committee. The Advisory Board provides strategic scientific guidance, while the Review Committee ensures the quality and integrity of research. Clinical research is overseen by the Ethics Committees of the 108 Military Central Hospital and VG-CARE, with additional support from the UNESCO Chair of Bioethics.

RESEARCH GRANTS

In 2025, a total of **thirteen** major research projects were conducted, funded by **seven** funding bodies from **four** countries. Their aggregate funding allocation amounts to approx. **5.5 million USD** for the full duration of the respective project periods.

Research Funding by Funding Body 2025 (%)

DAAD: German Academic Exchange Service | BMFTR: Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space | MOST: Ministry of Science and Technology | RCGLID: Research Center for Global and Local Infectious Diseases | NAMRU-2: Naval Medical Research Unit Indo Pacific | VinIF: Vingroup Innovation Foundation | 108 MCH: 108 Military Central Hospital



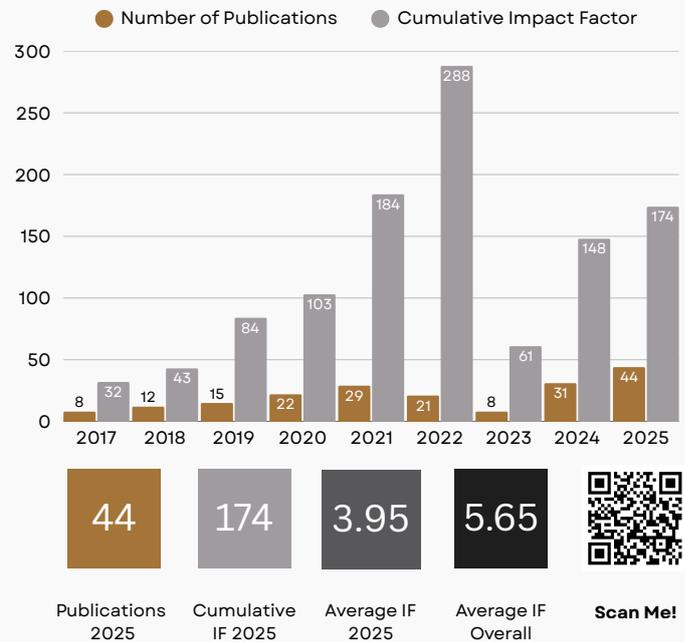
ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS 2025

- PAN ASEAN Coalition for Epidemic and Outbreak Preparedness (PACE-UP), Phase I (2021-2025) - DAAD / Germany
- Bacterial etiologies and prognostic factors of bacterial meningitis (2024-2025) - DAAD / Germany
- Interventions to decrease CRE colonization and transmission between hospitals, households, communities and domesticated animals (2022-2025) - BMFTR / Germany (EU-JPIAMR)
- Safety, Tolerability and Pharmacokinetics of Tafenoquine after Weekly and Escalating Monthly Doses of Tafenoquine in Healthy Vietnamese Volunteers (2021-2026) - NAMRU-2 / USA
- Discovery of novel biomarkers to monitor the progression of hepatitis B virus related chronic liver diseases and early diagnosis of hepatocellular carcinoma (2021-2026) - VinIF / Vietnam
- Production and efficacy evaluation of adhesin-coated, linolenic acid containing liposomes as a new delivery system for Amoxicillin against Helicobacter pylori (2020-2025) - MOST / Vietnam
- Clinical significance and molecular characterization of hepatitis E and hepatitis D virus among high risk populations in Vietnam (2021-2026) - MOST / Vietnam
- Development of a multiplex Real-time PCR KIT and an Antigen Microarray for the diagnosis, genotyping and prognosis of Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (2021-2026) - MOST / Vietnam-Israel
- Exploring the mechanisms of bacteriophage resistance in carbapenem-resistant Escherichia coli and Klebsiella pneumoniae towards effective bacteriophage therapy (2025-2028) - MOST / Vietnam
- Novel biomarkers and immune markers in screening, diagnosis, and recurrence monitoring of post-treatment hepatocellular carcinoma (2025-2028) - Johns Hopkins University / USA
- Accurate, rapid, effective, and cost-effective diagnostic solutions for UTIs and drug resistance (2025-2028) - UK
- Improving awareness and quality of life for patients with metastatic breast cancer in Vietnam through online interventions integrated with a mobile application (2025-2027) - 108 MCH / Vietnam
- Evaluation of operational capacity and effectiveness of the mobile laboratory vehicle for infectious disease diagnosis in remote areas of Vietnam (2025-2026) - 108 MCH / Vietnam

PUBLICATIONS

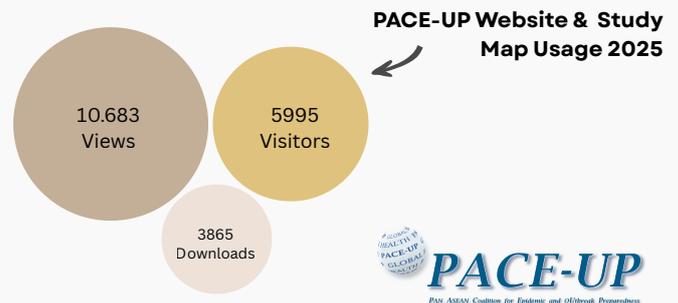
In 2025, the number of publications reached a record high (n = 44), accompanied by a substantial cumulative impact factor of 174.

No. of Publications and Cumulative Impact Factor (2017-2025)



DIGITAL TOOLS

Launched on December 5, 2023, the PACE-UP Interactive Study Map, enables users to filter publications by region, pathogen and article type, becoming a key resource for researchers and policy makers. In parallel, a secure data-sharing platform was implemented to streamline collaboration and data integrity between international partners.



PAN ASEAN Coalition for Epidemic and Outbreak Preparedness (PACE-UP)

PACE-UP is a Global Center for Pandemic Prevention in Asia, led by a multidisciplinary consortium fostering North-South and South-South collaborations. Funded by the German Academic Exchange Service and Federal Foreign Office of Germany, it builds individual and institutional research capacity for epidemic preparedness across ASEAN, through targeted training programmes and international research networks.

[PACE-UP \(https://paceup.org/\)](https://paceup.org/)



EXPERT SEMINARS & TRAINING

Expert Seminars & Training on Emerging Infections & Biosafety

The **PACE-UP Expert Seminars & Hands-on Training on 'Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases and Basic Principles of Biosafety'** were held from 19–23 May 2025 in a hybrid format at the **Vietnamese-German Center for Medical Research (VG-CARE)**, 108 Military Central Hospital, Hanoi, Vietnam. The program comprised two modules: Module 1 on expert-led seminars (19–22 May) covering epidemiology, outbreak detection and management, infection control, antimicrobial resistance, and zoonoses, followed by Module 2 with hands-on biosafety training (22–23 May) focusing on BSL-1 to BSL-3 principles, safe handling of pathogenic microorganisms, PPE use, mobile laboratory and diagnostic procedures in outbreak settings. The training targeted research-active professionals, frontline healthcare, laboratory personnel and a large number of PACE-UP alumni.

A total of **52 participants** attended onsite, complemented by **33 online participants** from **10 countries** across Asia, Africa, and Europe, including Cameroon, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, and Vietnam. The workshops contributed to strengthening regional capacity in infectious disease preparedness and laboratory response, with CME accreditation and certification awarded upon successful completion of individual module tests.



PACE-UP ALUMNI DAY

Strengthening Global Health for the Future

24th May 2025, Ha Noi



Together for Tomorrow



Watch our PACE-UP Alumni Video



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

On May 24, 2025, the **PACE-UP Alumni Day** at VG-CARE, 108 Military Central Hospital, brought together over 100 alumni, scholars and professionals from Europe, Asia and Africa. This event marked a key milestone in PACE-UP's journey, celebrating achievements while shaping future global health actions at the intersection of knowledge, policy, and training. A highlight of the day was the high-level panel on the theme of: *"From Connections to Commitments: Bridging Science, Education, and Policy for a Sustainable Global Health"*, featuring leaders, academic and policy experts from Vietnam, Germany, Indonesia and beyond to discuss effective cooperation mechanisms, the role of interdisciplinary training and research as well as strategies to maintain sustainability in global health cooperation.

Moreover, PACE-UP alumni introduced new research, presented scientific posters, discussed PACE-UP's contributions and connected with academics to enhance international cooperation. Ms. Tran Nguyen Minh Thu, Dr. Le Chi Cao, Ms. Le Nguyen Nhat Ha and Ms. Dao Thi Huyen were awarded poster prizes for their outstanding work.

This day reaffirmed PACE-UP's mission: building capacity, nurturing collaboration, and advancing equitable, sustainable, and resilient health systems.

Key Speakers



H. E. Helga Margarete Barth
Ambassador of Germany to Vietnam



H. E. Denny Abdi
Ambassador of Indonesia to Vietnam



A/Prof. Bui The Duy
Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, Vietnam



A/Prof. Nguyen Thu Thuy
Director Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam



Felix Wagenfeld
Director DAAD Regional Office for Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar



Prof. Dr. Till Bärnighausen
Director Heidelberg Institute of Global Health (HIGH), Germany

MOBILE LABORATORY DEPLOYMENTS 2025



The VG-CARE Mobile Laboratory is a fully equipped Biosafety Level 2 (BSL-2) unit with a Class III biosafety cabinet, designed to enable rapid outbreak detection, on-site diagnostics, and surveillance in remote settings in northern Vietnam. Equipped with advanced molecular and sequencing technologies, it supports early warning systems, real-time data transmission, and the deployment of trained rapid response teams for effective disease control.



OPERATIONAL TESTING

5th June | 108 MCH, Hanoi

Simulation of field conditions under fully autonomous operation, with comparative dengue diagnostics using rapid diagnostic tests and RT-PCR conducted in both a mobile laboratory and the VG-CARE laboratory.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

30th June | Vinh City, Nghe An

Public information on infectious diseases in Vietnam, including KABP survey on public awareness of infectious diseases in Vietnam. Event organized by the German Embassy Hanoi to celebrate 50 years of German-Vietnamese diplomatic relations.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

17-18 Oct | DeutschlandFest, Hanoi

Public engagement of 500+ visitors and high-level guests with the mobile laboratory. Event organized by the German Embassy Hanoi to celebrate 50 years of German-Vietnamese diplomatic relations.



DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT

03 - 07 Nov | Trùng Khánh, Cao Bang

Following severe floods, provision of diagnostic support within the 108 MCH community outreach program, providing free medical check-ups to 1,000+ individuals from remote communities. KABP survey on infectious disease awareness administered.



INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH

17 Nov | Định Hóa, Thai Nguyen

Screening of symptomatic patients from ethnic minority communities in Thai Nguyen for enteric and respiratory viruses. Surveys on risk factors and health-seeking behavior were collected and a KABP survey on infectious diseases was administered.





ACADEMIC CAPACITY BUILDING

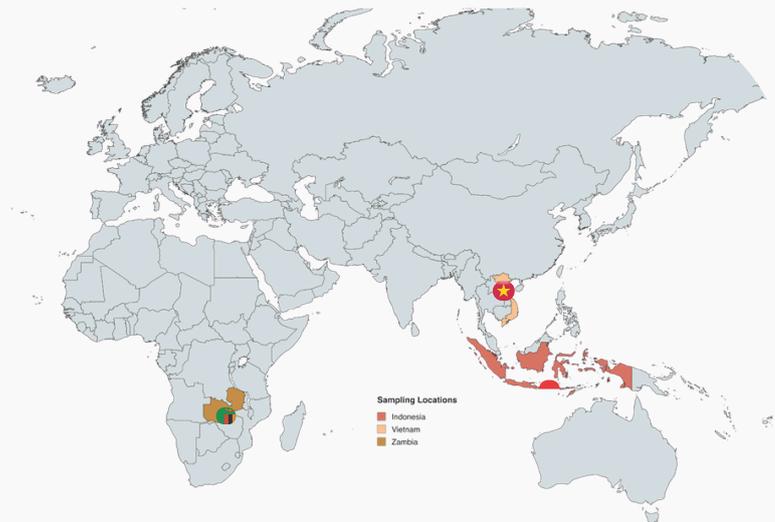
In 2025, 2 master thesis students completed their thesis research: Mr. Dwiki Haykhal Satriawan and Mr. Tran Hai Dang at VG-CARE, and Mr. Nguyen Tuan Ngoc at the Vietnamese-German University (VGU), Vietnam. One cross-continental internship was completed, including a three-month placement at the University of Lübeck and a two-month internship at HERPEZ in Zambia, both undertaken by Ms. Zahniar Zahniar from Indonesia.

RANCH: RESISTANCE PREVALENCE AND ANTIMICROBIAL-RESISTANT PATHOGENS IN ANIMAL FARMING IN LMICS

This **multi-country study** aims to identify and characterize antibiotic-resistant bacteria within the gastrointestinal microbiota of chickens, contributing to efforts to reduce the prevalence of antimicrobial resistance in low- and middle-income countries. A total of 600 cloacal samples were collected from broiler and free-range chickens across three countries: **Indonesia, Vietnam, and Zambia.**

Field and laboratory work included sample collection, bacterial culture, species identification using MALDI-TOF MS, antibiotic resistance profiling via VITEK, and molecular characterization through sequencing, conducted by multiple early-career researchers within the framework of PACE-UP. **Mr. Dwiki Haykhal Satriawan** (University of Jember) collected samples in Indonesia and Vietnam and conducted analyses at

VG-CARE under the supervision of Dr. Nhat Truong My as part of a five-month PACE-UP master's thesis. **Ms. Zahniar Zahniar** (University of Jember) collected samples in Zambia, with support from **Dr. John Tembo** (HERPEZ) and analysed them during a three-month research stay at the University of Lübeck under the supervision of **Prof. Dr. Dennis Nurjadi**. **Ms. Marlen Götzelmann** supported the processing of Vietnamese samples during a five-week internship at VG-CARE.





PhD Defense Dr. Do Van Dong and Dr. Le Chi Cao, Tübingen

ACADEMIC CAPACITY BUILDING

PHD STUDENTS PAGE-UP COHORT I

5 PhD Candidates



2 PhDs Defended (2025)



In 2025, the first two PhD candidates within the PACE-UP DAAD Global Health Center, **Dr. Dr. Do Van Dong** and **Dr. Dr. Le Chi Cao** successfully completed their PhD in Experimental Medicine at the University of Tübingen, Germany.

Dr. Dr. Do Van Dong

Integrated Diagnostic Approaches and Clinical Predictors in Central Nervous System (CNS) Infections: Evidence from Resource-Limited Settings in Vietnam

My thesis advances the diagnosis and management of CNS infections in resource-limited settings by demonstrating that molecular diagnostics, including the BIOFIRE® FILMARRAY® ME Panel and 16S Oxford Nanopore sequencing, enable faster and more accurate pathogen detection. It identifies key pathogens and clinical risk factors for poor outcomes, such as delayed presentation and severe neurological status, supporting improved targeted treatment, antimicrobial stewardship, and better patient outcomes.



My PhD in Tübingen was a demanding but meaningful journey. There were moments of uncertainty and setbacks, but those experiences taught me resilience, patience, and independence. Through working at the interface of clinical medicine and molecular diagnostics, I gained a clearer sense of purpose and direction for my future as a clinician-scientist.

Dr. Dr. Do Van Dong



Dr. Dr. Le Chi Cao

Zoonotic Hepatitis E and Enteric Protozoa in Vietnam: Epidemiological Evidence from Animal Reservoirs to Human Health Risk

My PhD research investigates the epidemiology of hepatitis E virus (HEV) and enteric protozoa in Vietnam. It identifies pigs and wild boars as key reservoirs of HEV, with high levels of human exposure but limited evidence of ongoing transmission. The study also reveals a high prevalence and diversity of Entamoeba and Cryptosporidium species, including those with zoonotic potential. Overall, these findings underscore significant zoonotic risks and the need for strengthened surveillance and a One Health approach.



A PhD journey is never easy, but with the unwavering support of my team at AG Velavan, Institute of Tropical Medicine, it became both possible and deeply rewarding. Through this experience, I have gained advanced research skills and broadened my perspective from infectious diseases to parasitic infections, strengthening my core expertise at Hue University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

Dr. Dr. Le Chi Cao



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025



PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKS

In 2025, VG-CARE/PACE-UP expanded its global network through key partnerships and memberships. The consortium joined the **External Advisory Committee of the Pandemic Fund** and became a member of the **Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN)** and **International Severe Acute Respiratory and emerging Infection Consortium (ISARIC)**. In Malaysia, new collaborations were established with Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), Royal College of Medicine Perak and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Universiti Malaya and Clinical Research Malaysia (CRM), strengthening regional research capacity and supporting future PACE-UP Phase II activities (2026–2030).



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 14-15 Jan 2025 • Symposium on **Multi-Sectoral Coordination in AMR Prevention and Control: Data-Sharing | Guiding the Future** - Hanoi, Vietnam
- 17-18 Jan 2025 • DFG/DZIF-funded joint international conference on **“Viral Infections of the Liver and Heart”** - Berlin, Germany
- 26 Apr 2025 • **World Health Summit Regional Meeting** - New Dehli, India
- 19-21 May 2025 • **PACE-UP Expert Seminars & Hands-on-Training ‘Emerging and Re-Emerging Infectious Diseases and Basic Principles of Biosafety’** - Hanoi, Vietnam
- 22-23 May 2025 • **PACE-UP Alumni Day ‘Strengthening Global Health for the Future’** - Hanoi, Vietnam
- 26 May 2025 • **ASIAN-EU Health Summit** - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 14-16 Jul 2025 • **10th International Conference on Global Public Health 2025 (GPH2025)** - Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- 28 Sept - 02 Oct 2025 • **European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health (ECTMIH)** - Hamburg, Germany
- 12-14 Oct 2025 • **World Health Summit 2025** - Berlin, Germany

STAFF & STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

We celebrated several outstanding achievements within the VG-CARE network, reflecting excellence in research, innovation, and academic leadership. **Dr. Do Duc Anh**, MD (PhD Candidate, University of Tübingen; PACE-UP) received the **Best Oral Presentation Prize** at ECTMIH 2025 for his presentation on molecular dengue surveillance and the potential of inflammatory biomarkers for clinical triaging. In addition, **A/Prof. Bui Tien Sy** was awarded the **Associate Professor** title, and **A/Prof. Bui Khac Cuong** received the *‘Third Prize at the Youth Creativity Award in the Vietnam People’s Army’*.





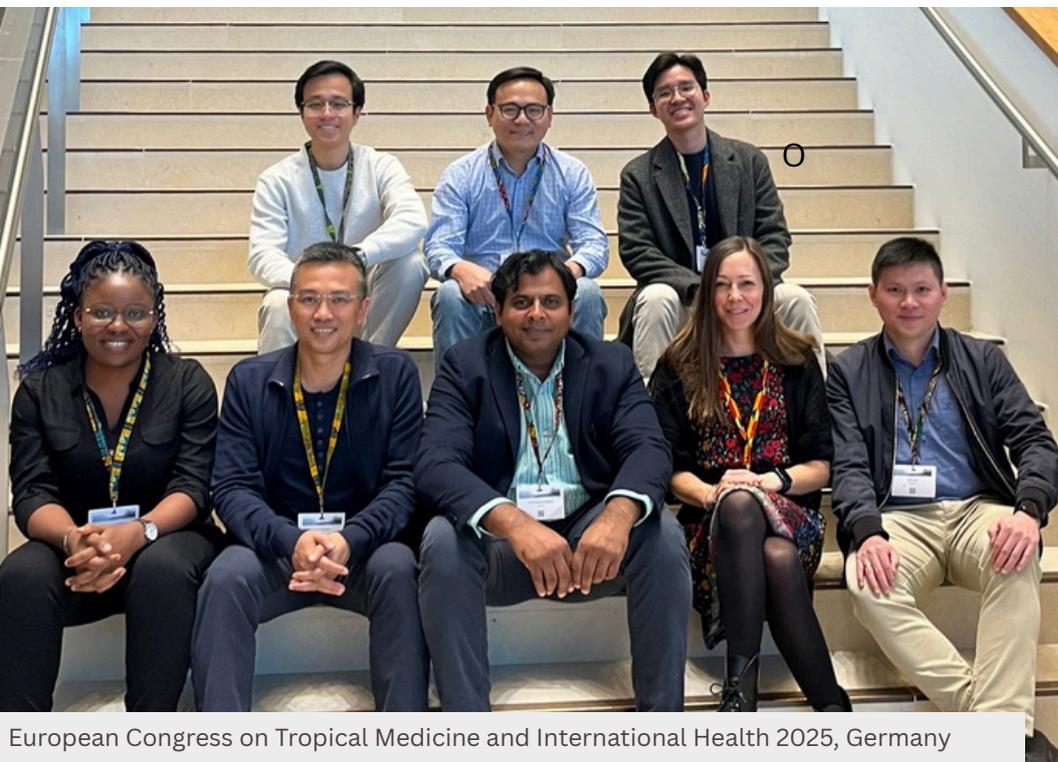
International Symposium on Viral Infections of Liver and Heart, Germany



VinUni CHS Career Days 2025, Vietnam



World Health Summit 2025, Germany



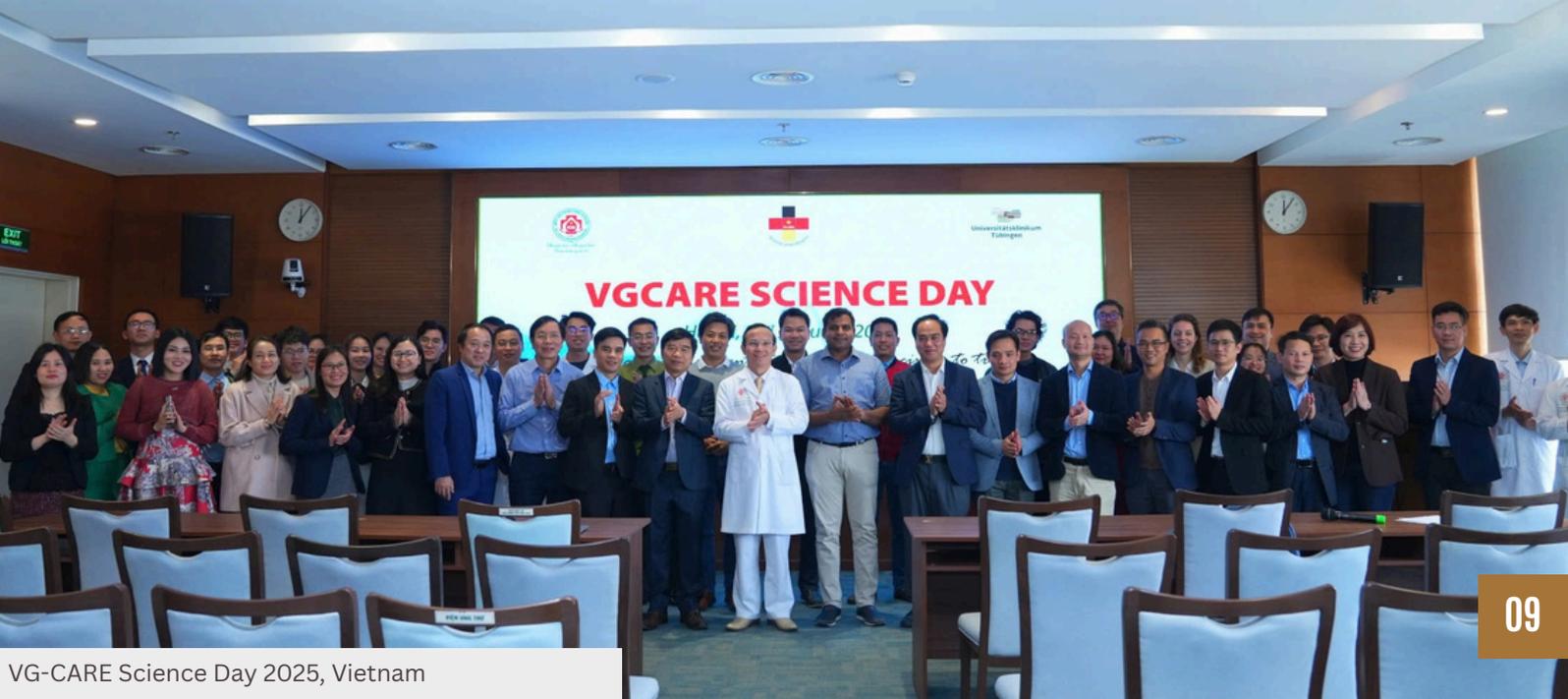
European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health 2025, Germany



WHS Regional Meeting 2025, India



ASEAN-EU Health Summit, Malaysia



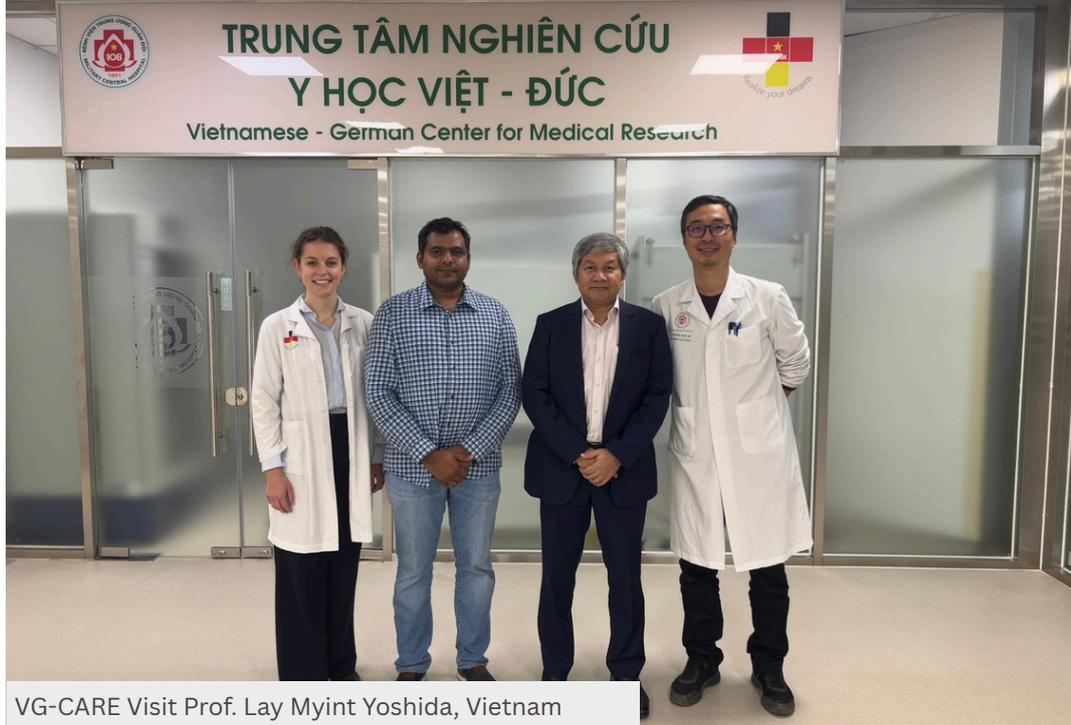
VG-CARE Science Day 2025, Vietnam



Master Defense Ms. Le Nguyen Nhat Ha, Vietnam



Master Defense Ms. Phan Thi Chau Giang, Vietnam



VG-CARE Visit Prof. Lay Myint Yoshida, Vietnam



Visit Prof. Barbara Seliger, Vietnam



VG-CARE Weekly Scientific Seminar, Vietnam



Internship Ms. Götzemann, Vietnam



Appointment of Visiting Professors at 108 Military Central Hospital, Vietnam



Vietnamese-German Center for Medical Research (VG-CARE)

108 Military Central Hospital
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