NEW FUND HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A passion to improve the health of Australia’s international neighbours has, for many years, been an important motivation for Sydney Medical School alumnus Dr Haydn Perndt AM. Dr Perndt, a Hobart anaesthetist, has spent a significant amount of his professional life working in developing countries. This work includes teaching and training in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, as well as service missions with the International Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières to a number of countries in conflict.

Dr Perndt has used his professional career in medicine as a vehicle to make a contribution to the health of disadvantaged people around the world. Citing his parents as the source of this passion, Dr Perndt is a past Chairman of the World Federation of Societies of Anesthesiologists, Education Committee and currently an active member of the Australian Society of Anesthetists’ Overseas Development and Education Committee.

“I have been very fortunate in life; the work in developing countries has been an effort to redress, in a small personal way, some of the gross inequalities of circumstance and opportunity,” said Dr Perndt.

Dr Perndt has also given back via philanthropic contributions. His generous ‘top-up’ funding enabled the Sydney University Medical School Class of 1977 to establish an endowed scholarship for Indigenous medical students.

Dr Perndt’s second major gift was made to the University of Sydney’s Office for Global Health, and has established the Stevenson Perndt Global Health Fund. This money will boost the work of the Office of Global Health to support innovative research projects, educational exchange programs and travel for academics from developing countries.

Contributions such as these provide a legacy to international development and improve Australia’s relations with other countries.

The Office for Global Health organises much of Sydney Medical School’s health focused research, learning and teaching. It establishes and maintains links with key international associates and government agencies to contribute to the health and wellbeing of our region by working in collaboration with in-country partners to build human resource capacity, especially in maternal and child health and health literacy.

The Office of Global Health has already established important connections in several low resource countries, including Timor Leste, Myanmar and Vietnam, where we are actively engaged in capacity building, teaching and research activities.

“Education is the key to all development. Universities provide a powerful intellectual environment to inform both the content and direction of development,” said Dr Perndt.