



MEDIA RELEASE

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High profile paediatric surgeon puts spotlight on overseas aid methods

In a recent trip to Mauritius a team of Australian paediatric surgeons from the ***Kind Cuts for Kids Foundation*** trained and assisted local medics to treat 162 patients and perform 63 operations.

The purpose of the visit was not only to enable treatment of children in desperate need of specialist surgery but to equip three local surgeons with the skills to carry on the work well into the future.

This was but one such trip. Since 2001 ***Kind Cuts for Kids*** has facilitated the treatment of 444 patients and undertaken 517 operations in Mauritius. Not to mention the 1,200+ kids treated during over 60 visits to 17 countries since ***Kind Cuts for Kids***' inception in 1993.

Much media attention is paid to the great work local surgical teams do with underprivileged children who are brought to Australia to undergo treatment, such as the wonderful success story of the recent separation of Bangladeshi conjoined twins, Trishna and Krishna.

Whilst keen to praise the fantastic efforts of these hard-working and generous teams, ***Kind Cuts for Kids Chairman, Professor Paddy Dewan***, says the money spent bringing such patients here could cause exponential benefit if spent on sending Australian surgeons overseas to train local medics.

"With our last trip, if each child we operated on had been transferred to Australia for the surgery, the overall cost would be well over \$10,000 per child. That equates to an expenditure of \$3,500,000. The overall cost of our recent trip was under \$500 per child and was fully funded by private fundraising efforts and the Mauritian government. No

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strain was placed on already-stressed Australian hospital resources and we enabled local doctors to carry on the work. This means hundreds of kids will be helped by our minimal investment rather than just one or two. I feel this approach is a far better use of private and public aid funds. Is bringing kids here really the answer?" said Professor Dewan.

"Operating in developing countries is like teaching the hungry how to fish as opposed to giving them fish."

About Kind Cuts for Kids

Since 1993 the **Kind Cuts for Kids Foundation** has worked in association with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to provide outreach care to countries in need of surgical and medical services.

The goal of the Foundation is to improve medical services to children in developing countries.

It aims to advance health care by education, demonstration and skill transfer to the local health care professionals.

Thus far **Kind Cuts for Kids** has treated over 1,200 kids during over 60 visits to 17 countries.

For more information see kindcutsforkids.net.

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