

Charity organiser urges locals to make a difference

By Nea Talbot

A Bermuda-based doctor has travelled to the remotest areas of the world to bring basic health care to those who have none.

Dr. Charles Swart, one of the founders of the ISIS Foundation, told members of the Hamilton Lion's Club it was imperative for successful businesses to make a contribution to the changing world, especially in developing nations.

ISIS Foundation is a charitable trust, based in Bermuda, whose emphasis is to initiate and manage outreach health care projects in the developing world.

Dr. Swart noted that his foundation was unique, because it was a subsidiary formed from ISIS Ltd., an insurance and consulting firm, which works to generate funds that help to sustain the foundation.

He said the primary concern and function of the foundation was to fund a limited amount of "grass roots" health care projects.

"There is a huge demand for health care," he said, "and Isis steps in and fills in the gaps to some of the most remotest areas in the world."

Dr. Swart said basic health care such as immunisation and sanitary water conditions were lost on nations like Uganda, Africa and Nepal, India.

"They have no access to health care," he said, "and there is a language barrier, so the challenge lies with explaining the different kinds of medical conditions to lower developed countries."

The project, according to Dr. Swart, also focused on educating

remote communities about recognising different health problems.

And it worked to help the community sustain itself once the project had completed its mission.

"We try and build a bridge between the Governments and the communities of these countries," he said. "We try to focus on the women and children of these areas and try to empower the women to understand health aspects."

Dr. Swart continued: "What we realised in these situations is that kids don't have a choice. We want to give those kids a chance to the most basic of health care."

"Kids are so easy to teach and in order to give them effective immunisation, we try to teach them with games. We work very hard to teach them the concept of disease."

Dr. Swart, who had worked extensively at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in its emergency trauma unit and paediatric department, said he had received much support from doctors, especially those in the US.

He said many of them donated their time to provide free health care.

"We have specialists that donate their time to an eye camp," he said. "Sometimes we have 1,500 patients, and 200 surgeries a day."

"It's very rewarding for the doctors to make blind people see. People have been blind because of a simple thing as a cataract."

Dr. Swart expressed his satisfaction at being able to perform selfless acts in remote communities and bring help to places that would otherwise go untouched by the outside world.



Healing Hands: Dr. Charles Swart spoke to the Hamilton Lions Club yesterday about his Bermuda based charity, ISIS Foundation.

"I always ask myself why do I do this," he said, "especially during times when I am up in the Himalayas."

"It's a challenge. To make a difference in life is very hard, but to make a difference in the health care system is incredibly rewarding. I just love to do it."

Dr. Swart said the ISIS Foundation is a charity organisation and all its proceeds go to help developing nations. Anyone interested in donating to the foundation can contact 296-7339.

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