

ANU MEDIA RELEASE

News from The Australian National University

FRIDAY 21 APRIL 2006

EYE CAMERA DONATION SEES THE LIGHT

ANU medical students will stay up-to-date with the latest technology for eye examinations thanks to a major donation from the Lions Club.

Lions Club chapters from the ACT and NSW have collected more than \$36,000 to purchase a retinal camera that will be dedicated to teaching fourth-year students from the ANU Medical School at the Canberra Eye Hospital.

The donation will be handed over at a ceremony at the Canberra Club at 7pm tomorrow night.

"The camera takes a photo of the retina. This will make it much easier for students to look at the back of the eye, instead of trying to peer through a hand-held ophthalmoscope," the Dean of the ANU Medical School, Professor Paul Gatenby, said.

"We'll also be able to purchase associated equipment like a digital printer, which enables images of the retina to be expanded, making inspection easier."

Professor Gatenby said it is now the clinical standard for retinal cameras to be used in eye examinations, which can lead to the diagnosis of prevalent diseases.

"One reason to inspect the retina is test for diabetes, which is the most common cause of blindness in the world. It's important that students know how to identify this and other conditions, so we're extremely grateful to the Lions Club for its generosity and support."

Lions Club District Governor, Mr Ian Gammage, said some of the funding for the new equipment had come from the association's Save Sight and Public Health Care Foundation.

"The Lions Club has been dedicated to tackling eye diseases since it was challenged to help by blind activist Helen Keller 80 years ago," Mr Gammage said.

The ANU Medical School entered into a partnership with the Canberra Eye Hospital last year to allow medical students access to its facilities at Symonston for training.

WHAT: Lions Club donation handover to ANU Medical School

WHEN: 7pm, Saturday 22 April 2006

WHERE: Canberra Club, 45 West Row, Canberra City

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