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MEDIA RELEASE

50th Anniversary colloquium explores traveling for health

New Zealand researcher John Crump is the first of six international academic experts who will engage students, faculty and the general public on traveling for health

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Simon Fraser University's President's Dream Colloquium series, set to begin this week, will spark dialogue on a globally burgeoning hot issue.

John Crump, the inaugural McKinlay Chair of Global Health at the Dunedin School of Medicine, University of Otago, New Zealand, will kick off this fall's **President's Dream Colloquium on Traveling for Health**.

Crump's lecture on Thursday, Sept. 17—3:30-5 p.m., ASB10900, IRMACS Theatre, Burnaby campus—will crack the door on a multidimensional exploration of health services' increasing globalization.

The free public six-part lecture series runs from Sept. 17 to Nov. 26 at the Burnaby campus, with the exception of the last lecture, which will take place at SFU's Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver. Reservations can be made [online](#).

Due to the growing ease of travel, trade in health services and globalization of new health technologies, healthcare patients, workers, students and researchers are increasingly travelling to receive, deliver and study, respectively, healthcare.

Medical tourism, which involves patients seeking care outside of their country, and medical volunteering abroad, involving health professionals who leave their countries to provide services, are just two dimensions of this trend.

Crump is a medical practitioner specializing in infectious diseases such as typhoid and HIV, and a researcher who has published extensively on ethical and practical issues surrounding infectious diseases' diagnosis and treatment. He will discuss ethics considerations for medical volunteering abroad.

"Medical volunteering abroad has increased rapidly since the 1970s, usually involving healthcare workers from wealthier countries providing some form of health service in a low-resource area," says Crump. "At first blush medical volunteering may seem intrinsically altruistic and free from ethical concerns. I will explore how things are not quite that simple."

Crump maintains a range of carefully considered ethics guidelines do inform clinical research in developing countries but ethics guidance for medical volunteering abroad is limited because the trend is so new.

"Medical volunteering has both benefits and risks. We need to carefully consider each to ensure that voluntary activities are really helping host communities and not making matters worse," adds Crump.

Jeremy Snyder, the organizer of this colloquium, says its subsequent speakers will similarly explore the pros and cons of travelling for health from their own research perspectives. The SFU Faculty of Health Sciences professor and SFU Medical Tourism Research Group member says: “Patient choices and economic opportunities are positives associated with traveling for health, but so are negatives, such as widening health inequities, and difficulty ensuring high quality care and adequate post-op care.

“This colloquium seeks to increase understanding of how movements of patients, researchers and health professionals are shaping how we experience and access healthcare.”

An initiative that is paired with SFU graduate courses within an associated discipline, this fall’s colloquium gives graduate students a strong understanding of the impact of globalization and travel on global health. “This group will make connections to speakers and amongst themselves that will be personally and professionally valuable for years to come,” says Gladys We, Office of Graduate Studies communications officer.

Other traveling for health themes to be covered in this colloquium series are **health worker migration, international human subject research, medical tourism in low and middle-income countries, medical tourism in Canada and circumvention tourism.**

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