



PRESS RELEASE

Voluntary Euthanasia Essay Prize at Sydney University Welcomed by Exit

Exit International Director, Dr Philip Nitschke, has welcomed the decision by the widow of Sydney doctor, John Elliott, to bequest \$100,000 to the Sydney University in order that an annual essay prize – the John Elliott Medal - be established. The John Elliott Medal is now the most valuable essay prize at the university after the Wentworth medal.

Mrs Angelika Elliott approached the University in late 2007 to look at establishing an essay prize in perpetuity to honour the memory of her late husband. In January 2007, Mrs Elliott accompanied her husband John Elliott (who was suffering from terminal cancer) to Switzerland where he received a legal, assisted suicide.

“John was a very private man all his life but towards the end he wanted to tell his story. He wanted to show people the irony of Australia’s end of life laws. And he wanted legal reform in this important area of human rights” said Mrs Elliott who lives in Rose Bay.

Speaking from Sydney, Exit Director Dr Philip Nitschke said he was pleased as the Medal would continue to bring the unresolved issue of Voluntary Euthanasia to the attention of younger members of the community.

“This is a very generous bequest. There is no other prize in the world that exists for university students on this subject. The John Elliott Medal will go a long way towards bringing about an eventual change to legislation in our country so that other ill Australians can spared the arduous journey half way around the world to obtain access to a peaceful death.”

John Elliott’s final journey was covered by Fairfax journalists James Button and photographer Kate Geraghty. Both won Walkley Awards for their coverage of the story.

The University of Sydney John Elliott Medal will be open to all undergraduates for the best essay which embodies the concepts of freedom and choice.

Exit will hold a commemorative morning tea to celebrate the announcement of the Award at 10.30am on Monday 21 April at the Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor St, Chatswood. All welcome.

Speakers will include:

- Mrs Angelika Elliott
- Mr Kep Enderby QC (former President - NSWVES)
- Nick Jaffer, Director of Development, University of Sydney
- Dr George Lang, Dr Elliott’s biographer