



Back L-R: Dr. Marilyn Porter, Karen Webber, Drs. Shirley Solberg and Sandra LeFort. Front L-R: Drs. Elly Nurachmak, Junaiti Sahar, Yuni Nursasa, and Kay Matthews. Unavailable for photo: Dr. Donna Moralejo.

Photo by HSIMS

### **International nursing project with Indonesia concludes**

After five years of hard work, the collaborative project between Memorial University's School of Nursing and the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta has come to a close. The dean of the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Indonesia, Dr. Elly Nurachmah, the project director in Indonesia, Dr. Junaiti Sahar and Yuni Nursasi, a member of the team, were at Memorial Nov. 21-28 to finalize plans for the final symposium in Indonesia in January, a policy paper for the Indonesian government and a wrap-up presentation.

The project on nursing, women's health and community outreach in Indonesia began in 1998, and over the years four junior faculty members from Indonesia have come to Memorial to earn their master's in nursing.

A major goal of the project has been to improve the health of mothers and children in rural Indonesia by developing educational programs for all levels of community health workers, professional and voluntary. After the Indonesian graduates trained at MUN returned home, they were assigned to the project team and the major focus of the project shifted to Indonesia. There, a strong community health model emphasizing health promotion and disease prevention was established in rural West Java through a centre for community health nursing education, research and practice. The centre is a clinical

practice site for undergraduate and specialist graduate nursing students and "train-the-trainer" programs in women and children's health for district level nurses, village midwives and volunteer community health workers. As well, four community health nursing research projects related to women and children's health have been carried out in the district by the Indonesian team in collaboration with the team in Newfoundland.

"Community health nurses can have a significant impact on health and are the best way to address the multiple health issues we have identified," explained Dr. Sahar. "We have a population of over 228 million, with 57 per cent living in rural areas. About 96 per cent of the population is Muslim and most are young – 30 per cent are less than 15 years and 65 per cent are between the ages of 15 to 64. Only 4.6 per cent of the population is over 65."

Dr. Sahar said that although more than 68 per cent of the population is employed, there is a huge disparity between the highest and lowest income groups. Health issues include poor quality drinking water and inadequate sanitation. Many health issues are related to infants, children and woman. "There is a lower status for women who are responsible to the health of the family."

Dr. Shirley Solberg said Memorial's involvement has included holding workshops and lectures in Indonesia for faculty and student on relevant topics and improving library and learning resources. MUN faculty have also been involved in producing an educational video on community health nursing for Indonesia and worked to establish the curriculum for a master's degree at the University of Indonesia. Fourteen students have already graduated from that program and 35 students are currently enrolled.

Dr. Marilyn Porter, Sociology, said the final step in the project is to influence government policy to improve community health through improved community health nursing services. "We've drafted a policy paper to promote the specialized roles and functions of community health nurses and this will be used in a wide-ranging workshop in January 2005 in Indonesia, followed by submitting a final policy paper to the Indonesian government."

The \$1.1 million Indonesian outreach project was largely funded through the University Partnerships in Cooperation and the Development of the Canadian International Development Agency program, administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. Kay Matthews was the team leader at Memorial and Dr. Yani Hamid served as the original project director in Indonesia, succeeded by Dr. Sahar. Other team members at Memorial included Drs. Sandra LeFort, Donna Moralejo, Marilyn Porter, Shirley Solberg, and Karen Webber.