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Manjimup-Bridgetown Times

Relay shows what a group of mates can accomplish

IT is a long way from Mukinbudin to Manjimup, but that is the road the Mates 500 Relay travelled.

For just over 1500km, a team of runners pounded the pavement through 40 regional towns to raise money and awareness of the Men's Regional Health Initiative and the Prostate Foundation of Australia.

The physical and emotional toll for the runners was worth it because both foundations are of vital importance.

Mates 500 Relay chairman Paul Omodei said he was confident the run had raised more than \$80,000.

The true value of the run cannot be put into dollars because the lives saved through awareness about men's mental health and prostate cancer are crucial.

The relay received well-deserved support from local communities and celebrities.

The donations of food from supermarkets in each of the towns were well appreciated by the runners and support staff.

Former Australian test cricketer Bruce Yardley travelled the whole journey and gave talks in the towns where the Mates 500 Relay stopped.

Other high-profile speakers included Dean Cox, Glen Jakovich and David Parkin.

To have so many high-profile speakers shows what the event means to the public.

The run has the potential to grow even bigger, but the support of the community — Manjimup and beyond — has to continue.

The event also shows what a group of mates from Manjimup and the region can achieve.