



Manjimup Bridgetown Times

Wednesday 16/04/2014

Page: 9
Section: General News
Region: Manjimup WA, AU
Circulation: 2693
Type: Regional
Size: 675.00 sq.cms.



slice

CUT STRAIGHT TO YOUR NEWS

press clip

The hard yards for fellow men

AARON CORLETT

THE physical and emotional pain felt by the runners of the Mates 500 Relay was all for the greater cause of creating awareness around men's health.

The 11-day relay started in Mukinbudin and finished in Manjimup on April 3 and raised awareness and money for the Regional Men's Health Initiative and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

Mates 500 Relay chairman Paul Omodei said the charities had given them great support during the run.

He said the organisations supplied volunteers throughout the relay and showed their commitment to Mates 500 Relay.

The feeling of admiration is mutual, with both charities extremely proud of the work of the runners.

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia WA State manager Cate Harman said she was blown away by the commitment of the runners to the cause.

"I was also amazed by the support at the communities in each of the towns the runners visited," she said.

"The run also reached out to people in regional centres who are struggling, which is incredibly important."

Cate said statistics showing men in regional areas were more likely to die from prostate cancer than those who lived in the city could be attributed to a number of factors.

"There is less access to health services but there is also the issue of men having trouble talking about a sensitive issue like prostate cancer," she said.

"The Mates 500 Relay encourages people to be proactive about their health and the message is definitely spreading."

Cate said the donations received by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia would be used to spread even more

awareness about the disease.

"We will use the donations to create literature and information packs about being diagnosed with prostate cancer and how to deal with it," she said. "The money will also be used to create support groups in remote regional centres."

Regional Men's Health Initiative community educator

Owen Catto said while the physical effort the runners went through was incredible, the messages they spread was also inspiring.

"The idea that it is OK to go to the doctor and seek help, this is not something that is easy for men in regional areas," he said.

"It's going to take a long period for a cultural change to happen but the Mates 500 Relay certainly helps."

Owen said the relay helped get messages about men's health out to a younger demographic – who were equally at risk compared to older men.

"The impact of the run is someone seeing the messages and saying 'OK, I'm going to do something' and then going to see a doctor," he said.

Paul Omodei said there were opportunities for the Mates 500 Relay to grow even bigger because of the support they had received.

"I'm not sure about the model for the future but former Carlton premiership coach David Parkin, who was one of our guest speakers, suggested we should take the run to the eastern States," he said.

"An option might be to have groups of six runners in different areas who do the relay for three days but we will have a review in the next few weeks and sort out the future."



Manjimup Bridgetown Times
Wednesday 16/04/2014
Page: 9
Section: General News
Region: Manjimup WA, AU
Circulation: 2693
Type: Regional
Size: 675.00 sq.cms.



slice
CUT STRAIGHT TO YOUR NEWS

press clip



The Mates 500 Relay team put themselves through physical pain to raise awareness about men's health.



Mates 500 Relay runners Ryan Taylor and Paul Omodei feel the effects of the long journey. PICTURES: DANELLA BEVIS