



**Professor Samar Aoun.** *Picture: Justin Benson-Cooper* d282360

# Waist disposal win

ESTABLISHING a Biggest Loser-style health competition to help men shed kilos and create healthy eating habits was one of the reasons Curtin University associate professor Samar Aoun was recently recognised for her outstanding contribution to the community.

The professor — who works at the Centre for Research into Disability and Society and the WA Centre for Cancer and Palliative Care — received the prestigious Paul Harris Fellow Medal last month.

Prof Aoun was invited to establish the health campaign for Rotary after she gave a men's health talk two years ago at the group's conference in Albany.

"We came up with an idea of a challenge to reduce (Rotary members') Body Mass Index in a year, before the next conference," she said.

"It was called the 'Waist Dispos-

al Challenge', targeting the middle of the body, or waistline.

"The program has seen some great results and we now have 23 clubs across WA involved, with some having 80 per cent of their members losing weight in the past year."

She said some participants had lost up to 30kg through education sessions; monthly weighing sessions and measurement recording, and regular phone coaching to ensure the Rotarians were taking the right weight-loss steps.

The program is continuing this year and Prof Aoun said more clubs had come on board after they witnessed the success of the program last year.

She said the award recognised her level of after-hours commitment and the other work she had done in the community to promote wellness and community cohesion.