



Academy in Goulburn and served for 10 years as a police officer in the Sutherland Shire and inner Sydney.

However a lifetime interest in health and medicine encouraged him to enquire about opportunities in that field. As he says, "Before I knew it, I was enrolled in a pre-med course which gave me a great introduction into university life, and a regime of study, which was totally foreign to me."

He is getting great support from The Australian Indigenous Doctors Association and another ex-policeman who is now a full time doctor in Broken Hill where Sean has been doing some of his intern studies. He says that he occasionally runs into some of his old "clients" from his policing days to their great surprise. He has also very much enjoyed his training time

with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

He hopes after graduation to work in Broken Hill possibly specialising in emergency medicine. He would also love to mentor young children to consider a career in medicine, because as a younger man he felt that because he was indigenous, a professional career was beyond him.

Sean is working and studying in the Gosford area this year and said he would like to come back to Parkes to talk about his progress.

Rotary's 'Waist Watch'

Rotarians from District 9460 in Western Australia are taking part in a ground-breaking campaign that offers to improve the health of participants and enhance knowledge of

how to tackle one of the most intransigent health issues facing the community.

The Rotary Waist Disposal Challenge, now under way in 23 clubs, is a formal health intervention project being undertaken under the approval of the Ethics Committee of Edith Cowan University.

But at the same time it is a fun challenge for Rotarians to lose weight, with clubs competing against each other to achieve the greatest reduction in the body mass index of their members.

BMI, measured as the individual's weight divided by his or her height squared, is widely recognised as an indicator of a person's liability to chronic lifestyle conditions.

The Rotary Waist Disposal Challenge is brought to us by a dedicated team led by Dr Samar Aoun, the public health specialist who famously had delegates to this year's District 9460 Conference passing around a hefty chunk of foam that represented their body fat.

The associate professor of Community and Population Health at Edith Cowan University (and the partner of D9460 Governor elect Zaki Dorkham), Samar says the project is about weight loss, choosing healthy foods and taking up regular exercise that will help prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

The challenge was launched in April last year with dieticians and physical activity specialists visiting each of the 23 clubs (nine city clubs and 14 in the country) to talk about nutrition, exercise and other healthy lifestyle habits.

At the same time, each of the clubs appointed two champions

responsible for monthly weigh-ins. The weigh-ins continued until February and the results announced at the D9460 district conference in Bunbury last month.

Altogether, 411 Rotarians participated in the weigh-ins and statistics from the first few months of the challenge starkly illustrated the scale of the weight problem in the community.

As the Rotary Waist Disposal Challenge slogan put it, "If you don't have enough time for good health, one day you might not have enough health for a good time."

The clubs that took part in the challenge were Albany East, Albany Port, Bunbury, Bunbury Central, Bunbury Leschenault, South Bunbury, Busselton Geographe Bay, Collie, Esperance, Esperance Bay, Harvey, Margaret River, Mount Barker, Katanning, Applecross, Attadale, Cockburn, Fremantle City, Mandurah, Mandurah Districts, Melville, Palm Beach, Rockingham.

The project was sponsored by the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, the Rotary clubs of Melville and South Bunbury, WA, Edith Cowan University, Telstra and the WA Country Health Services.

The program was also set to extend beyond WA, with District 9830 in Tasmania planning to take up the challenge this year.

Other Rotary clubs and Districts interested in finding out more about the Rotary Waist Disposal Challenge can contact Associate Professor Samar Aoun on 0419 911 940, by fax on (08) 9273 8428 or by email to s.aoun@ecu.edu.au.

John Feary
Rotary Club of Booragoon, WA ■

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