



Media Release

25 May 2015

Dental prosthetist saddles up for the Flying Doctor

By the age of 66 most men are looking forward to retiring and taking it easy, but not Dubbo dental prosthetist, Peter Muller. Following his 2012 ultra-marathon fundraiser in the rugged Yukon region of Canada, where he competed in "...*The world's coldest and toughest ultra marathon*," he is saddling up for the Royal Flying Doctor Service's South Eastern Section (RFDS SE) again.

Peter is doing a bike ride from Lightning Ridge to Dubbo to raise money for The Outback Oral Therapy and Health (TOOTH) program, which is operated out of Dubbo by RFDS SE.

Launched in early 2012 through a unique public/ private \$2.5m partnership between the Investec Foundation, the Gonski Foundation and RFDS SE, TOOTH is aimed at poor and deteriorating oral health in some of NSW's most vulnerable and remote communities.

"I have had patient referrals from the TOOTH program and heard of and met many people helped by the program," said Peter.

"Good dental health is so important to overall health and TOOTH has helped to improve both adult and child dental health in the Central West communities it serves."

"The Dubbo locals are very loyal to the RFDS SE and do a fantastic job of supporting them – so let's just say I'm going that extra mile."

When TOOTH began, significant levels of untreated dental decay, some five times higher than the national average, were discovered in both adults and children in the Central West. During the past three years the program has held 695 clinics and treated almost 5,000 patients in the communities of: Bourke, Collarenebri, Goodooga and Lightning Ridge, where access to dental care was either non-existent or extremely challenging.

Latest data shows a decrease in untreated dental decay in both adult and child patients and a substantial overall improvement in dental health in all four locations. In just three years TOOTH program has halved the decay in children attending TOOTH clinics and established a consistently declining pattern of decay in adults.

On his "Everyday Hero" page Peter posted the motto "...*Never Give Up*," which is very apt for a man who has also competed in ultra-marathons in the Gobi Desert in China, walked from Dubbo to Sydney and Kokoda Trail for charity. In addition, he is the oldest man to play premiership soccer in the Dubbo/ Orange league. His career has spanned 54 years to date and he has no plans to retire.

"I'm a bit of a fitness fanatic," admits Peter.

"I am planning do do a couple of fundraisng events for TOOTH this year and the 350kms from Dubbo to Lightning Ridge will be a nice training run."

Peter will start his ride at Lightning Ridge airport at 8.45am on Tuesday, 26 May, where the TOOTH aircraft will be landing en route to Goodooga. He is aiming to finish at the RFDS Base in Dubbo at around 2pm on Friday, 29 May.

His fundraising target of \$2,500 has got off to a great start with \$525 being pledged already. If you'd like to support Peter - log onto the Everyday Hero website, enter "Peter Muller" and click on the "Supporters" tab, or go to <https://rfsse-fundraisers.everydayhero.com/au/peter-98>

Follow Peter's progress with SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger at:
<http://share.findmespot.com/shared/faces/viewspots.jsp?qlld=0RTHq4Hqja75OxkMhoYnyAleRuQdK3FiB>

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For more information or photographs, contact Nick Bleszynski, Media Consultant, RFDS (South Eastern Section) on 0403 931 291 or nbleszynski@rfsse.org.au

ABOUT THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE

The not-for-profit Royal Flying Doctor Service has been taking the finest care to the furthest corners of Australia since 1928. The service provides 24 hour emergency cover to 90% of the Australian continent, via a modern fleet of specially equipped aircraft. In the past year, the South Eastern Section flew the equivalent of 6.25 round trips to the moon as it conducted over 5,000 clinics, took over 6,000 telehealth calls, had over 53,000 patient contacts and transported almost 8,400 patients.