



AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH

An Idea!

In 1981 Ian Scott, a member of the Rotary Club of Mornington, Victoria, suggested Rotary establish a fund specifically for research into Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). He believed that if Rotary Clubs across Australia could raise \$2,000,000, the interest earned from investing the money could fund SIDS research.

By 1983, Ian Scott's vision was realised. The Australian Rotary Health Research Fund was a viable organisation and in 1985 grants of up to \$100,000 for research into SIDS were disbursed.

Today

In 2009 the Fund, renamed **Australian Rotary Health**, is an Australian Rotary multi-district project supported by 1,175 Rotary Clubs and 34,370 Rotarians. Since 2000 Australian Rotary Health has channelled over \$20,000,000 into Australian health and medical research projects.

In 2008 over \$4,000,000 was disbursed in research grants and scholarships.

In 2008 \$2,300,000 was received in donations from around Australia – primarily from Rotary Clubs. The interest earned on investments, along with the funds received in donations, enabled the record disbursement!

Areas of Research

Australian Rotary Health has invested in broad-ranging research projects including SIDS, Adolescent Health, Environmental Health Problems of the Aged, Family Health and diseases such as Ross River Virus, Malaria, Bowel Cancer, Prostate Cancer and many others. In 2000 Australian Rotary Health adopted Mental Illness research as its focus and committed to removing the stigma of mental illness through education and community forums.

Health Scholarships

As well as funding research, Australian Rotary Health also provides health related scholarships. Over 300 Indigenous Australians have received top-up scholarships valued at \$5,000 per year to allow them to continue their studies to achieve a health related degree. Since this program began in 2003, 25 Indigenous doctors, 15 Indigenous nurses and another 40 graduates in such health areas as Dentistry, Speech Pathology, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy have graduated. A total of 84 Indigenous Health workers – assisted by Australian Rotary Health scholarships – are now in the Australian workforce.

In 2007 Australian Rotary Health introduced Rural Medical Scholarships, a \$5,000 annual scholarship for medical students prepared to work in a rural area during their final years of study. The program was funded again in 2008 and 2009 – 78 doctors into rural hospitals through funding from Australian Rotary Health.

In 2008 Australian Rotary Health began funding the Parnell Rural Nursing Scholarships. With the financial assistance of a benefactor, four scholarships valued at \$12,500 each are awarded to nurses in Queensland and NSW who complete a clinical placement in a rural area. Australian Rotary Health – getting nurses into rural hospitals.

Mental Health Community Forums

Since 2000 Australian Rotary Health has arranged, with the help of local Rotary Clubs, over 500 community forums to create more awareness and provide information on mental health issues. An estimated 25,000 people have attended a forum and Australian Rotary Health is acknowledged by the Commonwealth of Australia as a leading force in the de-stigmatisation of mental illness.

2009 FUNDING ALLOCATION

PROGRAM	SINGLE AWARD	NUMBER	TOTAL FUNDS
Mental Health Grants			
Research into mental illness for up to three years per project.	To \$60,000 pa	19	\$966,718
Ian Scott Scholarships (Mental Health Research)			
Awarded to 9 PhD students studying an area of mental health research.	\$26,000 pa	9	\$234,000
Post Doctoral Fellowships			
3 Post Doctoral Fellowships named after Rotarians Colin Dodds, Royce Abbey and Geoffrey Betts. For academics embarking on a career in mental health.	\$75,000 pa	3	\$225,000
Mental Health Evaluation Grants			
Research that evaluates and improves upon existing mental health services.	To \$60,000 pa	11	\$543,403
Research Companions PhD Scholarships			
PhD scholarships funded by an individual for research in any area of health	\$25,000 pa	3	\$75,000
Funding Partners PhD Scholarships			
Research in any health related area. Jointly funded by Australian Rotary Health, a Rotary Club or District and a University.	\$25,000 pa	41	\$927,896
Funding Partners Research Grants			
Jointly funded by Australian Rotary Health and a Rotary Club/District for research in any health area	To \$60,000 pa	8	\$365,204
Rural Health Evaluation Grants			
Research that evaluates and improves the quality of rural health services	To \$40,000 pa	2	\$79,707
Rural Medical Scholarships			
For medical students attending 13 Rural Clinical Schools throughout Australia. Scholarships are an incentive for students to complete at least one year working in a rural area.	\$5,000 pa	27	\$135,000
Parnell Rural & Remote Nursing Scholarships			
An incentive for nursing students to complete their 3 rd year major clinical placement and graduating year in a rural/remote area	\$12,500 pa	5	\$62,500
Indigenous Health Scholarships			
Awarded to Indigenous Australians studying a health related degree. Scholarships are endowed to encourage students to work in Indigenous communities after graduation. Jointly funded by Australian Rotary Health, a Rotary Club/District and State and Commonwealth Governments.	\$5,000 pa	70	\$350,000
Geoff Bailey Indigenous PhD Scholarship			
Geoff Bailey is founder of the Indigenous Health Scholarship program. This scholarship supports a past Indigenous Scholar undertaking a research PhD.	\$25,000 pa	1	\$25,000
Community Mental Health Forums			
Joint venture between Australian Rotary Health, Rotary Clubs and the Commonwealth Government. Forums educate communities about mental illness and mental health issues.	To \$1,000 per Forum	50	\$50,000
TOTAL - \$4,039,428			