



LIFT THE LID *on mental illness*

23rd May 2017

Letter to District Leaders and Rotary Clubs re **Lift the Lid**

Please pass on *the preliminary video and this letter* to every Rotarian in Australia

Australian Rotary Health, since its inception in 1981 and following the extraordinarily successful outcome of its initial research into sudden infant death syndrome, is a great Australian program of the Rotary Clubs of Australia.

This country faces a mental illness epidemic. It is a huge challenge and we know that Rotary can create a happier, healthier society through mental health research, particularly for our younger people.

Australia now faces some very stark mental health statistics, including:

- One in two people will suffer from a mental illness in their lifetime
- One in five suffers from a mental illness in any given year
- 50% of mental illness occurs before the age of 14
- More hours are lost through mental illness in the workplace than any other factor

From 2017 for at least three years, **Lift the Lid on Mental Illness** will become the principal fund raising initiative for ARH. As the largest non-government funder of mental health research, we are committed to help create a happier, healthier Australia. Our aim is to raise \$20 million by 2020 from the general public and businesses, with support from our Rotary Clubs and Rotarians, and so significantly increase the numbers of researchers we can fund.

As a proud and active Rotarian for 41 years and as the incoming Chairman of ARH for three years from September, I want you to know how much ARH does and the quality of its management. There is no better run Rotary organisation in this country.

Please visit the ARH website which will give more detail into our research activities and programs. Financially, we maintain a corpus from which our investments achieve an income which covers staff costs and all operating expenses. This allows us to continue giving 100% of all our donations to our research programmes.

We will contact you again early in the new Rotary year with specific suggestions which Clubs may wish to consider when approaching the general public. The **Lift the Lid** campaign will take place during the first 10 days in October, culminating on the 10th, World Mental Health Day. This will allow each Club plenty of flexibility when choosing their activities.

There is no greater health challenge than mental illness in Australia, particularly for our younger people. While it is a difficult scenario, we believe that by funding far greater mental illness research, Rotary will make a huge difference and, in time, help create a healthier and happier society.

Warmly

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Greg Ross
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Australian
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