

Helping indigenous people survive cancer

By **STEPHEN JEFFERY**

INDIGENOUS people have a new resource to help close the cancer survival gap.

The NSW Cancer Council in association with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW has released a booklet, *Aboriginal Cancer Journeys: Our stories of kinship, hope and survival*, that will provide information on treatment and support services for Aboriginal people affected by cancer.

Indigenous Australians are far more likely to die from some cancers than non-indigenous Australians.

"Our research shows that barriers to healthcare have resulted in Aboriginal people having a survival rate three times lower for some cancers than other NSW residents," Coffs Harbour Cancer Council's regional manager Patty Delaney said.

Providing access to relevant information is seen as the first step to improving the survival rate.

"Lots of work is being done to understand ways of removing these barriers but we need to start by ensuring the community can access relevant information about cancer and the

available support services," Ms Delaney said.

Consultation with the Aboriginal community was an important part of the development of the publication.

"This booklet was developed with Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people and we hope that providing the community with better information will be one step closer to closing the survival gap," Ms Delaney said.

The publication also contains the personal cancer experiences of nine Aboriginal people. These stories have been transformed into artwork by Aboriginal artist Adam Hill.

It is hoped this personal approach will inspire Aboriginal people to talk about cancer.

Consultation with the Aboriginal community was an essential part of putting the booklet together.

Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW chief operating officer Rodger Williams' father was diagnosed with the illness.

"Because we knew Dad was going to pass away, we were able to talk to him about his funeral wishes and other practical things," he said.

This experience opened Mr Williams' eyes to the importance of talk-

ing about cancer.

"One thing I learnt was how important it is to talk and listen," he said.

"Not only to your healthcare team but also to your family and friends.

"I hope the stories in this book

encourage everybody to tell their story and to hear other people's, too."

The booklet is free and is available to order from the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 or online at www.cancerCouncil.com.au.



ROLE MODELS: South Cares ambassador David Peachey and former Rabbits team-mate Chris McQueen helping kids to mark NAIDOC Week.

Souths ambassador making a difference

READING a book to Coffs Harbour kids yesterday, former South Sydney Rabbitoh David Peachey had a good story to tell.

It was about how much of a difference the Souths Cares program has made in the two years since the Rabbitohs made the coast their home away from home.

"This is about players giving back to the community and as I've found out the South Cares program is also about setting up players after their football careers are over," David said.

"It's great to be part of this special initiative in which Russell Crowe and the South Sydney board introduced an ambassador. It's made me realise what a difference you can make in a kid's life by just turning up as a role model.

While the NAIDOC Week book reading was a highlight for Peachey, and current NRL player Chris McQueen, a more difficult task lay up the road.

Other South Cares commitments involved speaking to juvenile offenders at Grafton's Acmena Juvenile Justice Centre.

"I want to take a positive message to these kids and especially the young Aboriginal kids in there saying hey it's NAIDOC Week being in here and offending is not part of our culture," David Peachey said.

"I hope we can send the message to them that there are more things to life.

"If we can help them realise their dreams and ambitions and break out of that cycle then South Cares is working for them, too."

Uni joins fight

By **STEPHEN JEFFERY**

THE fight against cancer was front and centre in Coffs Harbour yesterday as the Eastern University Games drew to a close.

Australian Catholic University (ACU) teams supported the Cancer Council's Call to Arms campaign by co-ordinating yellow into their uniforms.

"This is a new community initiative for our teams and we are very proud of our students for getting behind this great cause," ACU team manager Mark Young said.

"In particular, the three ACU teams playing in the KFC touch tournament will be donning the yellow, with the ACU tenpin bowling, women's netball and men's soccer teams following suit."

Mr Young said the ACU was not

limiting this action to the Eastern University Games.

"Our students at the corresponding Northern and Southern University Games will also be participating in this initiative," he said. "Our teams will show their support in more ways than just the armbands, with some sides wearing yellow shorts and others swapping out shoelaces and socks to take on the yellow theme."

Call To Arms began in 2006 when Essendon Football Club got behind team-mate Adam Ramanuskas - who was diagnosed with cancer - by wearing yellow armbands in the first Clash For Cancer match against Melbourne Football Club.

Since then, sporting clubs across Australia have joined the cause and wear yellow for one game during July.

For information on the Call To Arms project visit www.calltoarms.com.au

IN BRIEF

Vandal on the attack

● LOUTS smashed a window on a silver Holden Statesman in Park Beach Road, Coffs Harbour, overnight on Tuesday.

If you saw suspicious activity some time between 8.30pm on Tuesday and 8am yesterday, contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Cash for transport needs

● THE State Government will help establish a new statewide transport initiative by contributing an initial \$190,000.

The objective is to support Aboriginal people in attending events of cultural significance and be a catalyst for local organisations and transport providers to address the needs of local communities.

ETC to help save lives

● THE Enterprise and Training Company Limited (ETC) has launched a partnership with Surf Life Saving on the NSW north coast.

It will provide clubs with much-needed new rescue equipment to support the vital work of the volunteers.

ETC has come to the rescue of local clubs by providing tubes, boards, out-board engines for inflatable rescue boats and sun-safe clothing.

When it comes to your business you're the expert. That's why you deserve to talk to one.

Get tailored advice from our team of bankers who specialise in businesses of all shapes and sizes, all over Australia.

More Business Bankers. More time for your business.

commbank.com.au/morebankers



Determined to be different