



The Dr Edward Koch Foundation

Newsletter ♦ April 2020 ♦ Issue 46



Dulcie Bird, CEO

Message from the CEO

We have certainly started this New Year in a way that a few months ago was unbelievable enough with fires ravaging much of our country. Now in just the last couple of months our whole world has been turned upside down with the Covid-19 pandemic. These are changing and challenging times and I encourage you to find comfort, calm and wellness for yourselves. I know that now more than ever we can lift each other up even in the midst of great uncertainty and anxiety.

Research has shown that there is a “mental aftershock” after such a world-altering event and following this the Foundation’s work will be more important

than ever. For now, and until I can re-start Mental Health First Aid Courses, I will continue to work hard via social media to encourage and support the vulnerable in our community to take care of their mental health. Our planning for FNQ Suicide Prevention Week 2020 in September has been halted somewhat but work will continue. Because of social distancing and self-isolation it may not happen in its usual format this year however I will put on my thinking hat and hopefully our Taskforce members will do the same to see what we can do to still make this happen! Once again, remember your mental and physical health is extremely important during these uncertain times and I encourage everyone to be kind and caring both to yourselves and to those around you. This too will pass and I look forward to a bright and happy future for us all soon. In the meantime, stay home and stay well and remember “we are in this together”.

Dulcie.

The Ben Riley Memorial Mate-athlon

The Mate-athlon is held each year and it’s such an amazing atmosphere with lots of mates doing something together and having fun! But it is also a day to remember Ben and to acknowledge mental health issues. The Dr Edward Koch Foundation was the recipient of the funds raised from the day in 2019, and we will be putting this money to good use in our fight to make everyone aware of the issues of mental health and suicide and the projects and initiatives that are developed by our FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce to assist in the reduction of suicide and poor

mental health in our region. Thank you from the Foundation for the wonderful donation. Thank you to all those who contributed to the event to make this donation possible - the amazing Azure TNQ committee and volunteers, the incredible help and generosity of Michael Haseldine and the Peninsula Triathlon team, @activetriaus, the Emmett technique girls, C-Me Swim - Cairns leading learn to swim school, Phyx Me Physiotherapy, @diversden, @ritchieassociates and to major sponsor @telstrabusinesscentre Cairns. A big thank you from the Koch Foundation.





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Mental Health First Aid Courses

The Foundation held a Mental Health First Aid Course and a refresher course in February this year. Sadly, one scheduled for March had to be cancelled. As a consequence of Covid-19, the MHFA Team at Mental Health First Aid Australia are focus-

ing and progressing with the development of a new Blended Online Community Course and we will be keeping you updated on, if and when, we can offer facilitation of Instructor-led videoconference course delivery. To all those Mental Health First Aiders

in the community, draw on the knowledge gleaned from your courses to help those in the community who are in need of a mental health first aid conversation. But also, please stay strong and take care of yourself as well.

Simply Ballroom



The Simply Ballroom Dance School, a fundraising arm of the Foundation, commenced the year in fine form. A large number of new students enrolled and, aided by students with more experience who were willing to attend the beginner's classes, were coming along splendidly. Unfortunately, the classes have been halted, and we are hoping that the dance

students are practicing their moves in the safety of their homes. We hope to see them back on the dance floor as soon as it is okay for us to re-open the school. In the meantime, check out our new Facebook page to see past action by students and new dance hints whilst staying at home.

www.facebook.com/simplyballroomcairns/

Suicide Prevention Week 2020

Plans continue for the FNQ Suicide Prevention Week 2020 in September. There will need to be differences in how we achieve awareness through this project, and the Organising Committee is considering way to hold this in a different format to previous years, due to social distancing and self-isolation rules.

Thank you to our first bronze sponsor, Curtis Pitt, Member for Mulgrave. We understand that funds are now more limited for those who were contemplating sponsorship, but if you are still able to come on board in this project, please do so. Our theme "Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business" is even more valid as our communities bond



Bronze Sponsor

together in their fight against COVID-19. Stay safe and keep your eye out for further updates for our FNQ Suicide Prevention Week 2020.



Donations

Piccones Super IGA aid the Foundation with a percentage of your dollar purchase donated monthly. A big thank to Piccones for their great community spirit.

Century Cranes donate to the Foundation on regular basis, dependant on the work undertaken by their crane. Many thanks for their generosity for our work.

The Dr Edward Koch Foundation and the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce had several great initiatives planned for this year. Currently, all but the FNQ Suicide Prevention Week 2020, have been put on hold until further notice. However, we are still here. Staff and volunteers are working to keep these projects at the ready, waiting for the time when restrictions are lifted.