



Media Release

Friday 19 February 2016

Swim to Rio will benefit new ambulance station

Selwyn residents are being encouraged to 'swim' to Rio de Janeiro over the next six months to help raise funds for the new St John ambulance station in Rolleston.

Selwyn Aquatic Centre this month launched its Swim to Rio fundraiser, with participants aiming to cover the equivalent of the 11,765 kilometres from Lyttelton to Rio de Janeiro, finishing to coincide with the opening of the Olympic Games in Rio on 5 August.

Funds raised will go towards St John Project Rolleston, supporting the new St John ambulance station currently under construction.

Selwyn Aquatic Centre manager Kathy Moore says the event was initiated by staff at the centre, and follows on from a successful similar event last year.

"It's a great way to get our staff and members of the community working together to help raise funds for a great cause," she says.

"Taking part is really easy – and you don't even have to be a swimmer. People can swim or aqua jog lengths of either the 25-metre pool or hydrotherapy pools at the centre, and every length counts towards the total distance.

"The more people we have taking part, the quicker we'll get there. It might seem like a long way, but we've already had people completing over 100 lengths at a time – that's a great start."

The target distance of 11,765km is the combined distance of everyone taking part. "For example, if one person completes 20 lengths of the main pool a day, they would cover 90 km over the six months - so around 130 people could reach the target in that time," says Kathy.

Participants can register with the Selwyn Aquatic Centre, and receive a sponsorship form, which they can use to recruit sponsors for their lengths, or for cash donations.

People can swim or aqua jog as often as they like during the period. They can record their lengths each time they swim, and will get regular updates on their own efforts and the total distance covered.

Swimwear supplier Speedo is supporting the event with spot prizes plus a Speedo Shine – a new activity, swim, and sleep tracker watch – for the person completing the most lengths.

Danielle Gillespie, from the St John Central Area fundraising committee, says the group has a target to raise \$670,000 for the new station, and is delighted Selwyn Aquatic Centre is getting behind the project.

"We'd like to thank the Centre for their support. The new ambulance station is a big project for St John in Rolleston. With the growth in Rolleston in recent years it is important that St

John has facilities for us to provide ambulance services, as well as a resource available for the community if required.

“Our new station and facility will allow us to continue to provide ambulance services to Rolleston, but we still have to fundraise for it. This support from the Selwyn Aquatic Centre is fantastic.”

Anyone interested in taking part in the Swim to Rio can call in to Selwyn Aquatic Centre, phone the Centre reception on (03) 347 2734 or email sac.enquiries@selwyn.govt.nz.

Ends

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