

# Media Release

## KEMH docs swim to save premmies

Wednesday, 8 March 2017

A group of doctors at King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) have successfully conquered the 2017 Rottnest Channel Open Water Swim and achieved an incredible fundraising outcome in the process.

Team 'It'll be WIRF it' (Katrina Calvert, Sebastian Leathersich, Lauren Megaw and Trent Tolra) completed the gruelling 20km swim in a time of just over 8 hours.

Adding to their accomplishment, the group have raised more than \$12,500 for the Women and Infants Research Foundation (WIRF) to support research into preterm birth prevention.

Dr Calvert said the team was honoured to be part of the event.

"It really is an incredible day in the Perth calendar. We had a great time, and we were delighted with our accomplishment – raising nearly \$12,500 whilst doing it," she said.

"Anything we can do to fund research into the prevention of pre-term birth is worthwhile, and the fact that we had such a great time whilst fundraising for such a worthy cause was just an added bonus."

The team received very generous support from the Heath family who donated the use of their boat as a support vessel.

Mother, Carly Heath had a preterm birth experience in 2015 with her boy Beau born at 29 weeks at KEMH due to severe preeclampsia and suffering from HELLP syndrome.

"I was lucky enough to have two previous pregnancies that were complication free and went to term," Carly said.

"Beau was born almost eight weeks premature weighing only 1130 grams. It was a rough start to life for Beau who had to spend the first six weeks of his life in hospital."

Fast forward to today and Beau is a happy, healthy little boy that has met all his developmental milestones.

"When I heard through a friend that a group of 'King Eddies' doctors were doing the Rottnest swim to raise funds for preterm birth research and needed a support boat, Mick and I jumped at the chance to help," Carly said.

"We had such a great experience with the doctors and staff at King Eddies. The level of care we were provided was unbelievable and it made all the difference during a difficult time for all of us."

The Women and Infants Research Foundation is lucky to be the chosen beneficiary of some special people and their personal fundraising events, especially our exceptional colleagues at King Eddies.

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**ENDS**

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**Background:** The Women and Infants Research Foundation is one of Australia's leading independent research institution dedicated to improving the health of women, infants and reproductive health. We have a proud 40-year history of scientific discovery and public health achievement centred on the eradication of disease and the reduction of illness in women of all ages and babies.