

ROTARY CLUB OF PARRAMATTA CITY Inc. DISTRICT 9675

www.parramattacityrotary.org.au

Rotary Four Way Test

The Four Way Test challenges Rotarians, in everything they do, to ask of themselves:

Of the things we say or do:

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

Meeting 1st August 2016

Joint Meeting with Rotary Clubs from the Cumberland Zone

The Welcome

Graham Cook, president of the Parramatta Rotary Club, welcomed representatives from Blacktown City, St Marys, Holroyd, Parramatta City and Parramatta Daybreak Clubs, along with PDGs Barry Antees, Paul Reid and Jack Elliott, and the zone coordinator, Vera Liondis.

Our Toast

Brad Fuller, of the Parramatta Rotary Club, proposed a toast to the medical profession.

Our Guests

Guests tonight were two nurses, Renan Gaspi and Chris Zhang who specialise in coordination of organ transplantation and assist in theatre.



Chris Zhang, President Graham Cook and Renan Gaspi

The Donate Life Week

President Graham said the Donate Life Week started on July 31 and would continue till August 7. The program had been operating for a number of years, designed to promote the organ donation program, and this year district governors throughout Australia had given their pledges to support it. He read a letter from IR President John Germ who complimented Australian Rotary to support the program, which was being conducted in association with the Australian Organ and Tissue Authority.

John said that organ donors had the opportunity to have enormous impact on the lives of others once they went on the organ donor register. At any one time, there were more than 1,600 Australians on that list. Putting one's name on the list took only a few minutes but it had potentially life-saving consequences. All of us, he said, would accept an organ if we needed it. There should be "no hesitation" in putting our own names on the register.

Graham gave an example of a Tamworth Rotarian who had been on a liver transplant list since January last year who felt "hopeless and useless and longed to be a contributing member of society again. "Transplantation is the only treatment that will give [such a] desperately ill person a chance of survival," he said.

Organ Transplantation

Renan said that for someone on kidney dialysis, requiring six-hour stints on the machine three days a week, transplantation was the best form of treatment. The dialysis treatment cost \$85,000 a year, the patient could not travel far or do much because of the need to keep the machine nearby, family relationships tended to crumble under the constant pressure, the patient had associated health problems like blood pressure, lethargy and depression, lack of fertility and a shortened life expectancy. "We have 30 dialysis patients at Westmead Hospital just in one ward alone," he said. "You look at the whole of Westmead and that is a lot of dollars." After a patient had had the

transplant, a week or two later that person was back to normal living, there was more energy. The success rate for kidney transplants was more than 95 percent. The lives of transplant patients were so changed that every few years a “transplant games” was held to underline how dramatic the change.

Renan said Westmead Hospital, one of five hospitals in the state that did transplants, looked after western Sydney and the western areas of the state. It had the fortune of having Professor Jeremy Chapman, a world-recognised authority on transplants, operating there. He said that when a prospective patient turned up, the patient was carefully assessed, including medically and in other ways, including the patient’s psychological and social circumstances. The prospective patient had to abide by certain rules, including supplying blood samples and keeping up the patient’s own medical treatment. When that was satisfied, the patient went onto a waiting list, which could be for years. If the person was in the O blood group, that could be seven years, for B that could be five to seven, for A that could be three years.

Renan said that at Westmead Hospital, there were 200 patients needing a kidney. That was about the same with the other four transplant hospitals in the state. Nationally, there were about 1,500 patients needing a kidney transplant. But last year, there were 415 donors added to the list. The supply, he said, did not match the demand.

Along with Chris, Renan answered questions that came thick and fast, including one from Christene McSeveny, who wondered whether advanced years might prohibit a person from becoming a donor. It was not, Renan said. Donors would be aged between 18 and 74. But the team had retrieved liver from a person who was aged over eighty. It was not ideal but for a person suffering liver disease so advanced that the person had only a week or so to live, it was a godsend. “We are an ageing population and there are a number of people in their seventies who have asked for a transplant,” he said. By the same token there had recently been a liver transplant on a child two months of age.

A person registering could consent to which of his or her organs that person wished to donate. When consent had been given, such organ or organs could be harvested. If consent had not been given, the most senior next-of-kin would have to give consent and if there was one dissenter in the family, the organ could not be harvested. The organs had to be assessed as the state they were in. A person who had drowned or suffered a stroke would be expected to have intact kidneys. Diseases past and present had to be taken into account. With cancer, it depended on how long ago it had been, what type and how severe. Once accepted, organs could be transported regionally or even interstate.

President Graham thanked the speaker and remarked in particular on the quality of the questioning. He mentioned a man in Pakistan who had devoted himself to providing medical services for the poor, who had decided that at his death, which happened to be at 88 years of age, his organs could be donated as a last gesture of benevolence to the community.

For those who wish to become organ donors, they should start with the website, being:
www.donatelife.com.au

For Parramatta City Diaries

6-7 August. RAWCS conference at Port Macquarie, which PPs Malcolm and Keith will be attending.

8 August. Regular club meeting. Speaker will be Ted Plummer, head of government and community relations, Sydney Airport

15 August. Regular club meeting

20 August. FOLIA dinner at St Stephens Normanhurst.

22 August. Regular club meeting

29 August. Regular club meeting

5 September. Regular club meeting