



MAYORAL MEMO - 23 MARCH 2022

Hofstadter's Law: It always takes longer than you expect, even when you take into account Hofstadter's Law.

It is a clever self-referential adage that goes some way to explain that sometimes, stuff just takes time! Despite the best intentions of all concerned.

I saw two examples of that in this last week.

I had the pleasure of welcoming the first ever group of 24 Year 1 students to the School of Rural Health. For many years, the University of Sydney had a program in Dubbo where 32 students across Years 3 and 4 of their medical degree studied here. This was highly successful and students achieved great results. Some students even decided that a regional location was a great place to live so they stayed regionally.

On the back of that success, the University lobbied the government to have a program with an entire degree delivered from Dubbo. I played a minor lobbying role but I do remember a visit to Parliament House in

Canberra when Joe Canalese; Bruce Robinson; David Tilley and myself met with the Hon Mark Coulton MP and the then Health Minister, the Hon Peter Dutton MP. This visit was way back in 2014. This was not the first discussion for this particular proposal and many discussions occurred afterwards. Now, in 2022, we finally have students in this program. Some of those students would have been in primary school when the idea was first conceived. In discussions with the students, several told me that they simply would not have studied medicine if they could not have done it in a regional centre such as Dubbo.

The second example involves what I will be doing today. I am on a bicycle riding from Walgett to Bourke – a mere 224km. This is part of the Toyota Tour de OROC where we will ride 1,140km over 6 days. It was approximately 2009 when the then Member for Dubbo, Dawn Fardell and then Mayor of Cobar, Liliane Brady proposed the idea of medical accommodation for pregnant women from Cobar. A fundraising committee was formed to start to raise money for such a facility and in 2013 the first Tour de OROC was run and raised \$176,000. On the back of that fundraising effort, an application was made for money from the Cobbora Transition Fund. \$3.3 million later and six more years and finally, in 2019, Stage 1 of Macquarie Home Stay was built. Here we are today, some 13 years after the original proposal, and we are still raising money for the much-needed facility to expand.

Even when it is obvious that a facility is needed and will be well-utilised, things just take time. No, I'm not really sure why either but maybe Douglas Hofstadter has the answer.

Tell me something that has taken longer than you expected at
mayor@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Mathew Dickerson
Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

Last Edited: 24 May 2022