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NOWRA WOMEN WIN STATEWIDE WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

An all-women's team from Nowra has been named the 2017 winners of a statewide weight loss and healthy lifestyle program after collectively losing more than 77 kilograms – more than the weight of the average woman.

The *NSW Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge* is a program for Aboriginal communities delivered by NSW Health in partnership with the NSW Rugby League.

Each year it consists of two 10 week competitions – the *George Rose Challenge* and the *Julie Young Challenge*.

The team *Dead or Deadly* was named winner of the *Julie Young Challenge* last night at the 2017 NSW Rugby League Knockout official draw at West Ashfield. Each member of the winning team lost an average of 3.87 kilograms.

The *Dead or Deadly* team also took out the overall Challenge Shield prize bringing together the first place winners of both competitions.

Dead or Deadly spokesperson Willow Firth said the initiative has significantly changed the lives of her 20 teammates.

“We have been exercising up to five times a week doing boxing, resistance and circuit training and also made simple dietary changes,” Ms Firth said.

“We’ve learnt that exercise and eating well can make so many other positive changes to your life – whether that’s improving mental health, feeling more positive and happier as well as increasing motivation, self-esteem and energy.

“It wasn’t about going on a diet, but making simple permanent changes to eating behaviours. Fad diets don’t work so we set up long-term healthy eating plans for participants and their kids.

“During this journey there has been an increasing feeling of interconnectedness. It’s all about team work and supporting each other and making that pathway into a healthy life accessible, easy and fun.”

The second place winners were *Breathe Easy Queanbeyan Clear Waters*, with team members averaging a 3.17 kilogram weight loss during the challenge.

The *Tweed Goorie Go Getters* – who shed an average of 2.7 kilograms – was named in third place.

Director of NSW Health's Office of Preventive Health Dr Chris Rissel said the annual *NSW Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge*, now in its sixth year, engages Aboriginal communities to lose weight and improve their health.

"I want to congratulate the *Dead or Deadly* team for its hard work and commitment in helping to build a healthy community in the Nowra region," Dr Rissel said.

"They are a true example that with some commitment others too can adopt positive lifestyle measures for life.

"We are living in an environment where inactivity and not eating enough fruit and vegetables is the norm. More than 57 per cent of Aboriginal people in NSW aged 16 years and over are overweight compared to 52.2 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.

"The *NSW Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge* is a key initiative of NSW Health's Make Healthy Normal program in trying to reverse these statistics."

For more information on the NSW Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge go to:
www.nswknockouthealthchallenge.com.au

For more information on Make Healthy Normal go to:
www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au