



Department of Health
Government of **Western Australia**
South Metropolitan Area Health Service

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Miracles do happen - just ask Ronald

RONNIE Traynor has a lot to be thankful for and he doesn't attribute it all to the luck of the Irish, despite hailing from Dublin, but rather to staff at Fremantle Hospital and several guardian angels.

The Applecross resident said an incredibly lucky set of circumstances led to his life being saved when his weekly round of squash pennants at Hilton Squash Club came to a crashing halt at about 8.15pm on March 11.

The first piece of good fortune was that Rural GP Registrar Dr Klaasje Doorenbosch, was also playing squash pennants - she wasn't supposed to be playing and was filling in for a couple of players who had cancelled.

As soon as Mr Traynor collapsed Klaasje, who is currently working as a Fremantle Emergency Department Registrar, was called to help by another player who happened to know she was there and within a minute was performing CPR which she continued for 17 minutes until not one, but two ambulance crews arrived.

When the 000 call went out a second ambulance heard the call and was familiar with the location as they had attended another emergency in the area earlier that day - they immediately went to assist the primary ambulance.

Meanwhile, at the squash club, Mr Traynor's squash partner, Steve Brew, had positioned his friend into the recovery position when Klaasje arrived.

"Initially I felt a very faint pulse but within seconds he had a cardiac arrest and I started CPR," Klaasje said.

"His colour began to improve quickly and I made regular assessments and continued CPR until the ambulances got there."

A second doctor, Dr Robert Stone, who was also playing squash at the club, came to offer Klaasje assistance.

The Ambulance crews detected Ventricular Fibrillation (an erratic heartbeat) and had to use the defibrillator (chest paddles) to shock Mr Traynor's heart into a normal rhythm. They also intubated him and stabilised him enough to transport him to Fremantle Hospital.

"It felt really good to hear the sound of Ronnie's very strong heartbeat from the heart monitor directly after he was shocked," Klaasje said.

As soon as the ambulance left the squash club Klaasje phoned Fremantle Hospital Emergency Department and gave her medical colleagues a detailed account putting into place another sequence of events that also contributed to a great outcome.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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The Emergency Department crew met the ambulance, put intravenous lines in for drugs, completed ECG's diagnosing the massive heart attack and took him to the hospital's Emergency Cardiac Catheter Theatre within an hour of arriving into Fremantle Hospital.

The Cardiac team unblocked Mr Traynor's Left Anterior Descending Artery (one of the central arteries) which was 95 per cent blocked.

After the successful procedure Mr Traynor was taken to the Intensive Care Unit where his body temperature was kept at a cool level to reduce the risk of permanent brain damage. It took him a couple of days to recover fully from some initial short-term memory loss.

Just six days later on March 17 (yes, you guessed it - St Patrick's Day) he was discharged home into the care of his two sons.

And as for Mr Traynor's account of what happened - well he can't remember a thing about his brush with death but he remains full of admiration for the medics who all helped to save his life.

"I was absolutely blessed that my heart attack happened where and when it did and even though I don't remember a thing about it accounts from several people are that I survived the unsurvivable," Mr Traynor said.

"If I had been home, where I live alone, I wouldn't be here and it's down to Klaasje who literally kept me alive for the first 17 minutes until the ambulance and hospital crews took over.

"I couldn't praise the hospital enough - I had instant attention then which saved me and even when I went back to Emergency on Monday (14 April) with a scare, the support I received was unbelievable.

"The whole sequence of events was unbelievably extraordinary and if you had planned it, it wouldn't have worked out the way it did. I really feel as though I have already won the lotto."

Klaasje was invited to join Mr Traynor, his family and friends for dinner recently as a token of thanks.

"Klaasje told me she felt we had a bond for life, and I couldn't agree more," Mr Traynor said.

**In the past few days seven similar emergency primary angioplastys have been performed on patients having heart attacks - all in the Cardiac Catheter Theatre's dedicated Emergency Theatre opened specifically for emergencies in February 2007.*

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