

## Booklet helps save rural lives

Rural Ambulance Victoria (RAV) and Rotary have come up with an easy way to help people communicate their medical history to ambulance crews anywhere in country Victoria.

‘The role of emergency service personnel can be made more difficult by not being able to readily access vital information,’ said MICA Paramedic Tom Athorn.

‘An unconscious or confused person may not be able to communicate with ambulance paramedics in their time of need.

‘Personal details and medical history can be critical sometimes as paramedics must make important, life-saving decisions.’

To overcome this problem Rural Ambulance Victoria and local Rotary clubs are distributing a special Emergency Medical Information Book (EMIB) throughout country Victoria.

‘This book originated in South Australia as a joint initiative between Rotary International District 9500 and South Australian Ambulance Service,’ said Mr. Athorn, RAV Co-ordinator for the project.

‘These books are of value to any person regardless of age, particularly those with a medical condition or known allergies.

‘A normally well person with no current medications also should be encouraged to use a EMIB recording personal details and stating they have no current medications or medical problems.’

Mr. Athorn said people only needed to follow some basic points to properly use an Emergency Medical Information Book:

- ONE book contains medical information on ONE person;
- The patient information is written into the book and must be kept up to date.

The book can be kept in a convenient location such as the fridge door by using the magnet pouch.

It can be easily taken when a person travels.

It can be used to provide information to ambulance personnel, doctors or hospital staff.

Mr Athorn said Victorian country Rotary clubs would be primary sponsors local implementation of the project.

Rural Ambulance Victoria Chief Executive Officer Doug Kimberley praised Mr Athorn for his work in

implementing the project.

'He is to be highly commended for his initiative in adapting this project for use in rural Victoria.

'I believe this book will help Rural Ambulance Victoria Paramedics save lives and help them provide the community with a high standard of service.'

Tom Athorn said the book was being distributed through ambulance branches and Rotary clubs throughout rural Victoria.