

Inner-West Weekly

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NEWS

Pecky powers on for her patients

FIONA BRADY

AS a surgical registrar Dr Upeksha (Pecky) De Silva never thought she'd be using her legs, instead of her lifesaving hands, to help cancer sufferers.

But that's exactly what the Liberty Grove medic will be doing this Sunday when she runs a half-marathon to raise money for *Cure Cancer Australia*.

Her patients certainly approve of her marathon effort: "I've mentioned it to a couple of my patients and they've sponsored me," said Dr De Silva who works at Campbelltown Hospital.

"I also have friends who've lost parents to cancer who sponsored me and encouraged me, it's been a very big eye-opener."

Dr De Silva has been taking part in the non-profit *Can Too* program which offers beginners and experienced athletes professional coaching to run or swim in endurance events.

In return participants raise money for charity.

Dr De Silva, who's been training with a Can Too team in the Inner West, signed up for the half-marathon after successfully completing the 9km Bridge Run last year.

"On Wednesdays we do track training at the athletics track at Homebush and on Saturdays we meet up and do a long run," she said. We're not allowed to



Dr Pecky De Silva, of Liberty Grove, will run a half-marathon this Sunday.

Picture: PHIL BLATCH -PP19236

have iPods. We run and we chat and we go for coffee afterwards."

And as someone who never thought she could run, Dr De Silva is keen to stress that the program is

not just for "super dooper athletes".

"It's not age or sex specific," she said. "It's for anybody who just wants to get out there and run."

To find out more visit www.cantoo.org.au