



# HELLENIC COMMUNITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC.

REPRESENTING ALL GREEK AUSTRALIANS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### 5% Was Enough: Greek Tourist Defies Odds to Walk Again

16/06/26

The Hellenic Community of Western Australia has celebrated the remarkable recovery of Greek tourist Ioannis (Yiannis) Vidiniotis, who has revealed he is walking again after suffering a devastating spinal injury while swimming at Perth's Cottesloe beach on New Year's Eve.

The 28-year-old arrived in Perth from Athens late last year, for a two-week holiday to visit family and struck a sandbank while swimming at the popular beach.

Doctors at Royal Perth Hospital only gave him a **five-percent** chance to walk again after undergoing two spinal surgeries.

The Hellenic Community of Western Australia facilitated a fundraising effort through the GoFundMe platform before Yiannis was able to fly back to Greece in February, under strict medical supervision, to start rehabilitation at a specialist clinic in Athens.

Since then, Yiannis has undergone intense rehabilitation and shared an emotional video message with supporters, thanking the Greek community of Australia and the wider Australian public for standing by him throughout his journey and recovery.

"I want to say a big thank you to the people and the Hellenic Community and all Greek Australian diaspora, who without even knowing me were able to stand by me" he said in his statement.

"I think I was very lucky in my misfortune. Right now, four months on after the accident I can walk again with a cane and take care of myself and it's only a matter of time before I go home – something no one expected."

"Against all the odds, four months after the accident, I'm able to keep fighting to get back to the normal daily life I had before the accident.

"I hope this story serves as an inspiration for others who have found themselves in similar situations, giving them strength and the determination that I had from the beginning."



Hellenic Community  
Aged Care



HELLENIC COMMUNITY ADMINISTRATION  
SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELENE CHURCH  
COMMUNITY HALLS  
COMMUNITY'S TOWER HOUSE

Hellenic Community of Western Australia CEO Paul Savvas said Yiannis' story had become a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through resilience, faith and community support.

"When doctors told Yiannis he had just a five per cent chance of walking again, most people would have struggled to imagine a day like today. Yet here we are, watching him take those steps and inspire people across the world."

"His determination has been extraordinary, but so too has the generosity shown by Western Australians who embraced a young man they had never met and rallied behind him when he needed it most."

"This wasn't simply a Greek community effort. People from every background stepped forward to help. Thousands of Australians contributed because they saw a young man facing an unimaginable challenge and wanted to make a difference."

Mr Savvas said Yiannis' recovery would continue to inspire people long after his rehabilitation journey ends.

"Sometimes five per cent is enough. Yiannis' courage, determination and refusal to give up are an inspiration to us all."

**-ENDS-**

**To watch the full video message with English subtitles, click here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/l2oQmaVXpac>

**Vision of Yiannis undergoing rehab can be found here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/HpwBFpevrKY>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/HpwBFpevrKY>

**Media Contact:**

Peter Kapsanis

Ethos Media and Communications

Ph:0428 2934 00

E: [peter@ethoscommunications.com.au](mailto:peter@ethoscommunications.com.au)