



## World record for patient trial

**G**IRRAWHEEN resident Robert Vreedenburgh's recruitment into A Very Early Rehabilitation Trial (AVERT) has broken a world record.

Mr Vreedenburgh is the 223rd patient to join Royal Perth Hospital's AVERT, making it the largest stroke rehabilitation trial in the world.

AVERT is a national study that looks at whether early exercise following a stroke improves the rehabilitation process.

Strokes are the cause of the highest number of long-term disabilities in the western world.

Mr Vreedenburgh had a minor stroke at the beginning of this month, losing some movement in his arm and leg, which made him unable to walk.

He has improved dramatical-



**Jacqueline Ancliffe with Robert Vreedenburgh.**

ly since he began treatment under AVERT, regaining movement and walking a short distance without help.

Royal Perth Hospital neurosciences senior physiotherapist Jacqueline Ancliffe said Mr Vreedenburgh's dedication to

recovery contributed to his improvement.

"Robert has been an ideal patient throughout his entire treatment, he is a very active man and does all his exercises," she said.

Mr Vreedenburgh said he is glad he is part of the study, although he wished he had visited the doctor earlier for a check-up, as it may have prevented him from having a stroke.

"At the first signs of stroke you should go straight to the doctor - waiting is not worth the risk," he said.

"This can happen to anyone at any time but the important thing to remember is that if you get treatment early there is life after stroke."

AVERT plans to recruit a further 2104 patients for the study and extend the program internationally.