



For Lyme Disease Awareness & Action

LYME DISEASE
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
ABN 46 417 706 647

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MEDIA RELEASE

Compassionate doctors bullied for treating Lyme-like patients

The Lyme Disease Association of Australia (LDAA) fully supports the Senate inquiry into the medical complaints process in Australia co-sponsored by South Australian independent Senator Nick Xenophon and Victorian independent Senator John Madigan.

Lyme-like patients across the nation have harrowing stories of their health degenerating while they wait to see one of the scarce medical practitioners available to treat this misunderstood disease. The problem has been exacerbated by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) restricting some Lyme-like doctors from treating their patients.

Senator Madigan knows of at least 7 doctors who have been hounded by AHPRA for treating patients suffering from a Lyme-like illness. Given there are only about 20 doctors remaining who openly treat the thousands of people diagnosed overseas or misdiagnosed in Australia – this situation is dire.

The majority of patients have waited for years to receive a diagnosis and treatment only to have their doctor taken away from them. Many of these patients had begun to regain quality of life after receiving life-saving treatment, but regressed back into full-blown disease as their medical care was abruptly withdrawn. Australian medical authorities deny the disease exists and hence fail to understand and manage the disease effectively. Australia's approach to this public health crisis is appalling and is shamefully behind the rest of the developed world.

A [Senate inquiry into the evidence of Lyme-like disease](#) in Australia is currently open for submissions from patients and their supporter, researcher and scientists. Some Lyme-like patients have told this Senate inquiry their personal stories of being sick and vulnerable while seeking treatment, but receiving instead bullying and intimidation from doctors who deny the disease.

This public health crisis makes all Australians vulnerable. LDAA President Sharon Whiteman says, "The doctors who go out on a limb to help Lyme-like patients in Australia are precious to us. We need a medical system that supports doctors who compassionately care for sick people. Why does that need to be said in Australia? There are many unanswered questions and these Senate inquiries are vital to seek answers and recommend corrective action."

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Additional resources for media are available from the Lyme Disease Association of Australia's [website](http://www.lymedisease.org.au/media)

Need help to tell your story to the inquiry: <http://www.lymedisease.org.au/>

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