



For Lyme Disease Awareness & Action

13 May 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

Olympic swimmer Tessa Wallace is the new ambassador for the Lyme Disease Association of Australia

The Melbourne Lyme community are holding their annual awareness event at Federation Square again this year. They are delighted to be able to announce the Lyme Disease Association of Australia's (LDAA) new ambassador Tessa Wallace.

'LDAA is delighted to have Tessa on board as an ambassador. We are so proud of what she has achieved and hope her inspiring story will draw attention to this neglected illness,' said LDAA President Ms Sharon Whiteman.

Tessa Wallace said, 'I am so honoured and excited to be the new ambassador of the LDAA and be a voice for those suffering who often feel alone and silenced. Hopefully as a team we can create more recognition for the illness and hope for these people who need and deserve more answers and support. Perseverance has been my number one motto throughout my swimming career so hopefully I can inspire others through this battle to stay positive and never give up.'

"Tessa Wallace, was diagnosed with Lyme disease a few years back, despite this has performed at the absolute international level – World Championships, Commonwealth Games 2010 & 2014 and Olympics 2012 – all whilst battling the illness and doing it all with a smile. She has character, toughness, tenacity and heart. Tessa is someone whom I have the utmost respect and admiration for and I truly believe she would be an amazing asset for the LDAA," said Daniel Kowalski, GM Australian Swimmers Association.

The Australian Lyme-like patient community join forces nationally each year to raise funds and awareness during the 'May Lyme Project'. Thousands of sick Australians are stuck in the great divide between their desperate reality and the denial of the health regulators and medical authorities. There is widespread agreement from government and medicos alike, that Australians are becoming sick after a tick bite.

Even so they claim there is no acceptable evidence of the American strain of Lyme disease and use that to justify denying Australians treatment and respect. Given there has been no epidemiological investigation, and barely any scientific research into what is making Australian sick it is hardly surprising there is no scientific evidence.

The Senate committee that has been investigating evidence of Lyme-like illness in Australia released an Interim report recommending the inquiry continue under the government to be elected in July 2016. It also recommended education and awareness for the public and medical profession. Though this falls short of committing to immediate action to address the needs of patients, it contains crucial evidence that is now on the public record.

Ms Sharon Whiteman said, 'While it is difficult to believe our health system could fail so dismally, patient's stories are real. Candidates are moved to take action when they fully understand the situation. The May

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Lyme Project aims to keep the issues of Lyme-like illness in the forefront of politicians' minds during the upcoming busy election period.'

The reality is that there are no government guidelines for doctors to manage the locally acquired disease nor an effective policy response. Doctors are not trained and many feel intimidated by the stigma. Patients plan to inform candidates and their local communities about this during the annual awareness and fundraising campaign. Senator Madigan has been an outstanding Victorian politician in championing the cause and will be a warmly welcomed speaker at the Federation Square event at 2pm on Saturday.

May Lyme Project Event Melbourne

Time: 12 – 4pm
Date: Saturday 14 May 2016
Place: Federation Square
Corner Swanston St & Flinders St,
Melbourne
Speakers: 2pm

More information about the LDAA's May Lyme Project is available on the [LDAA website](#).

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Media contact: media@lymedisease.org.au or 0406 378 792

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

Senate Inquiry page:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Lyme-like_Illness