



For Lyme Disease Awareness & Action

LYME DISEASE
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
ABN 46 417 706 647

26 January 2017

MEDIA RELEASE

OAM awarded to doctor saving lives of Lyme-like patients

The Order of Australia Medal (OAM) has been awarded to Dr Richard Schloeffel Director of Pymble Grove Health Centre and Chair of the Australian Chronic Infectious and Inflammatory Disease Society (ACIIDS). The Australian Lyme-like community regard Dr Schloeffel as a life saver, an inspiration and bastion of good medicine. They are deeply grateful for his extraordinary ability to rise above the tangled controversy surrounding the validation and treatment protocols for Lyme-like illness in Australia. He has put the health needs of patients first.

Dr Schloeffel states, 'It is an honor and a privilege to be acknowledged as a leader in this field. The work we do is exemplary, thorough and satisfying.' He has been both the voice and the doctor of last resort for thousands of Australian who have developed chronic and debilitating symptoms after a tick bite. His passion is seeing people respond to treatment and recover sufficiently to regain their lives, often after years of misunderstanding and neglect from the medical profession at large. Lyme-like patients fall through the cracks of old paradigms of medicine. He believes Australia has an obligation to make sure these patients are heard and not dismissed because they are in the too hard basket.

Dr Schloeffel is a committed campaigner leading Australia to new paradigms to understand, treat and educate patients, families, doctors and the general community who suffer through these difficult and disabling illnesses. He frequently mentors and assists in training doctors who are new to the chronic and complex disease world. He invites doctors who are struggling with treating such patients to get on board.

Dr Schloeffel takes a collaborative approach with colleagues both here and internationally. Dr Schloeffel travelled to Germany after witnessing patients having difficulty navigating international treatment protocols and facilities for Lyme-like illness. He also helps doctors who are bravely and compassionately treating Lyme-like patients navigate the self-regulated medical system.

Many of the ACIID doctors who have received training in tick borne illness domestically and overseas are being investigated and restricted from treating patients by the Australian medical authorities who do not understand these complex illnesses. The myopic focus on denying the American Lyme disease is in Australia, rather than understanding the patient

INFORMATION | SUPPORT | EDUCATION | AWARENESS

PO Box 137, Stockton NSW 2295
info@lymedisease.org.au | www.lymedisease.org.au

cohort and what treatments are effective, has been an enormous barrier to patients regaining their health in Australia.

Dr Schloeffel has given notable evidence to the Senate inquiry into “Growing evidence of an emerging tick-borne disease that causes a Lyme-like illness for many Australian patients.’ He called for ‘an intellectual and a committed effort from the health departments, national and state, in our public system to help everybody who thinks they might have this illness.’ The Senate committee’s Final Report recognised that complex, emerging diseases require treatment even in the absence of definitive research, quoting Dr Schloeffel who had said, ‘The science has not caught up, but the compassion needs to be there.’

Lyme Disease Association of Australia President Sharon Whiteman said, ‘Dr Schloeffel is an extraordinary Australian making a significant difference to some of our most vulnerable Australians. His courage in demonstrating consistent commitment to the highest professional standards and values is to be commended. We live in a time when Australians who are in the emerging disease cohort are ‘out in the cold’ and without proper medical care. We are deeply grateful as we’d be lost without Dr Schloeffel and the ACIID doctors.’

-- END --

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

For interviews with Dr Schloeffel from the 27th January 2017 please phone (02) 9418 1388 option 1 or email admin@pymblegrove.com.

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

Senate Inquiry page:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Lymelikeillness45