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Public Hospital: Access to Treatment

The Foundation would appreciate anyone in Australia who has, due to their special circumstances, sought care through a public hospital for the treatment of Wet MD and required a Lucentis injection and been informed by the hospital that they cannot supply the treatment. Indeed, if anyone has had any problems with the access or affordability of Lucentis treatment we would like to know. Please phone our Research Officer, Laylla Amnsor, on **1800 111 709**.

How Can I Make a Donation?

As a charity, the MD Foundation relies on donations, bequests and sponsorship to fund its operations. A donation slip and reply paid envelope is included with this newsletter for your convenience.

You can now make a donation to the MD Foundation online using your credit card.

This secure method of payment is available instantly and allows you to make a donation at a convenient time for you, any time of the year. For tax purposes, a receipt will be instantly e-mailed to you on payment.

Expanding the Navigator Library Access Project (NLAP)

The MD Foundation would like to thank the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation for their generous contribution to expand the Navigator Library Access Project into regional areas of NSW in 2008.

After the success of the Project in existing libraries, further funding was sought to extend this project in order to reach out to regional areas of NSW where there is an unmet demand for the service.

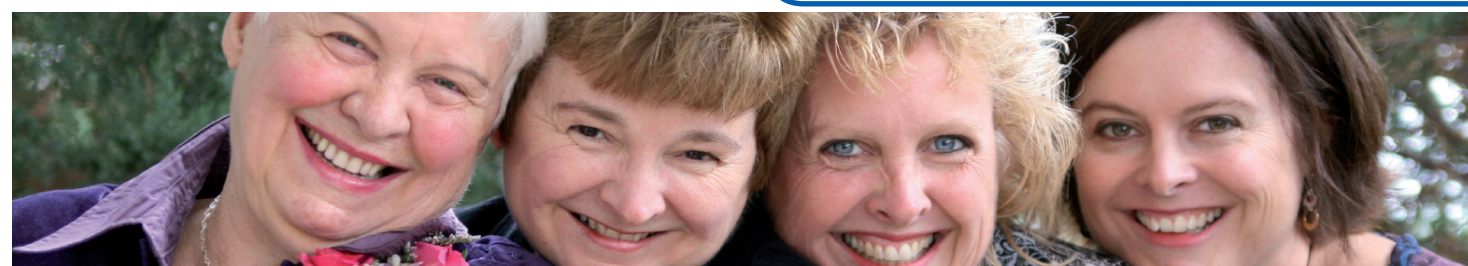


Project Vision

Thank you to everyone who has completed the research questionnaire about Macular Degeneration and the MD Foundation's services. Your feedback is now being analysed by the Foundation's Research Officer and we will keep you updated with the results that arise from the study.

Did You Know...?

There has been a considerable amount of research into Macular Degeneration in recent years, not only in Australia but worldwide. The MD Foundation aims to provide access to current research and reports related to Macular Degeneration from around the world. You can access this research on the MD Foundation's website: www.mdfoundation.com.au



Our focus is your vision

Newsletter

AUTUMN
1st Edition 2008

Family, Friend and Carer - A Guide

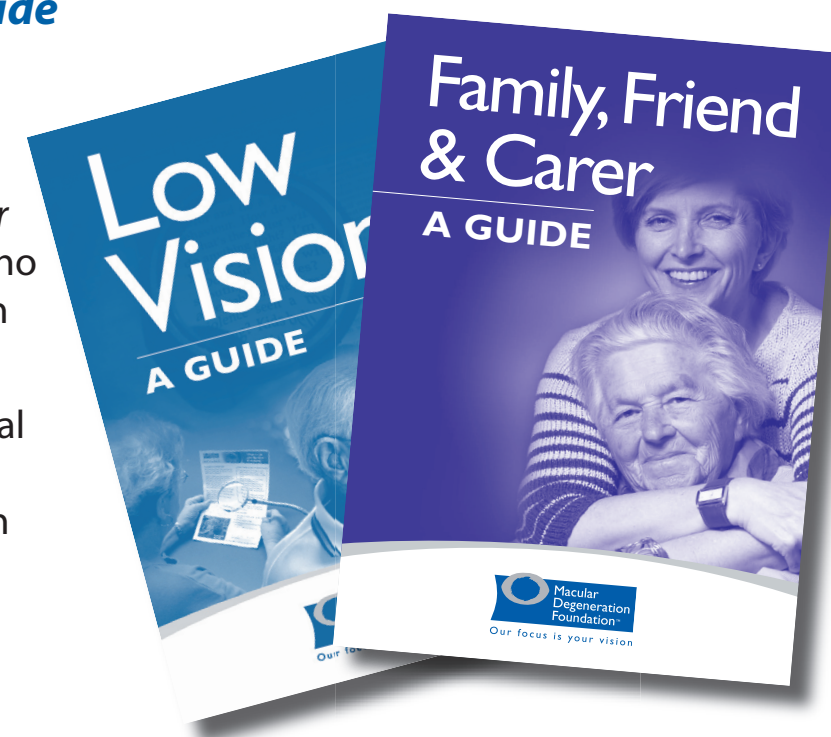
After the success of the Foundation's publication *Low Vision - A Guide*, a second publication has been added to the series titled *Family, Friend and Carer - A Guide*, which is a guide for those who support a person who is blind or vision impaired.

Family, friends and carers are an integral part of the support system for people who are blind or have low vision. Given that MD affects the ageing population this support system is very often for elderly husbands or wives who are struggling to cope with the changes that come with this new role as a carer. This may include becoming the driver, the reader, the shopper, the chef and the patient companion. These changes can have significant impacts on carers.

This booklet can be used for all types vision impairment - not only for those who have a friend, family member or patient with Macular Degeneration.

The MD Foundation would like to thank the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC), which has provided the funding to produce the publication.

Family, Friend and Carer - A Guide will be launched at Parliament House during NSW Seniors Week by The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP, NSW Minister for Ageing and Disability Services. The launch will take place on Thursday 10 April, 2008 at 10am.



The MD Foundation has also updated the information in the first publication of the series, *Low Vision - A Guide*.

Low Vision - A Guide is compiled for patients, family, friends and carers, optometrists and ophthalmologists. It contains general information on low vision; advice for the newly diagnosed; coping strategies; low vision tips; a helpful directory of services, contact details of major organisations and providers of adaptive technology and other useful information. The booklet now includes new information on mobility and depression.

If you would like to order your copy of *Family, Friend and Carer - A Guide*, or your **updated** version of *Low Vision - A Guide*, please phone the MD Foundation on:

1800 111 709

Education

Awareness

Support

Research

Representation

DISCLAIMER: This Newsletter is produced by the Macular Degeneration Foundation Australia. It is intended as a Newsletter and its contents do not constitute medical advice and should not be relied on as such.

Latest Research on AMD

Researchers at the University of Sydney have conducted a study which suggests that the risk of dying from cardiovascular conditions is at least doubled in people with AMD.

The study tracked people in NSW over a decade aged 49 years or more and found that those who developed early stages of MD had twice the risk from dying from a heart attack or stroke over that period.

Professor Paul Mitchell, from the Centre for Vision Research, led the study and said that the scientists do not yet fully understand the link between the conditions but that it could,

in part, be explained by shared risk factors like smoking and high blood pressure.

"There might also be a genetic link, because both AMD and cardiovascular disease have genes that are important to determining who will develop them," said Professor Mitchell. "Eye doctors and GPs should be aware of this potential link and take care to check eye patients for risk factors associated with vascular disease."

However, researchers did admit that more work was needed to confirm the study, as the number of participants was relatively small.



Roth Gair Charity Golf Day

On Sunday 3 February, the Lions Club of Forest Hill in Victoria held the inaugural Roth Gair Charity Golf Day with all proceeds from the event going to the Macular Degeneration Foundation.

Mr. Roth Gair was a member of the Forest Hill Lions Club and had Macular Degeneration. His widow, Mrs. Jean Gair, attended the fundraising luncheon and spoke of her husband's commitment to Lions.

Many teams participated on the day and the highlight was the putting competition that saw the competitive nature of golf come into play.

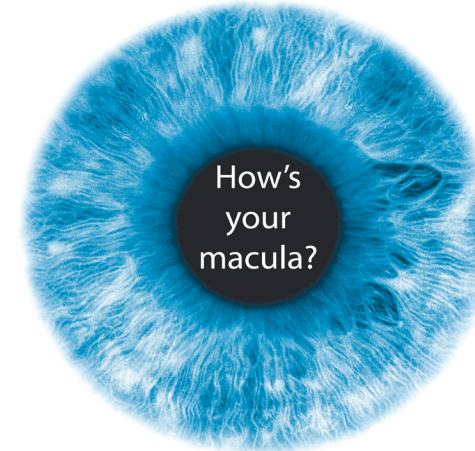
The MD Foundation's CEO Julie Heraghty was invited to attend the event and spoke to players and guests at the luncheon held at the Rosebud Country Club about the disease and the work of the Foundation. She also thanked Mr. Jamie Kennedy and his committed team of helpers, the sponsors and Mr. Bob Shearer for their outstanding efforts in making the day a wonderful success.

Lions have long held a reputation of outstanding contribution to eye health causes, and the Macular Degeneration Foundation is thankful for the recognition of such an influential community service organisation.



The MD Foundation would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Lions Club of Forest Hill for their hard work and support.

Mr. Jamie Kennedy with Mrs. Jean Gair at the Golf Day



MD Awareness Week 2008

This year MD Awareness Week is being held from Sunday 25 May – Saturday 31 May, 2008. The theme for this year is "How's Your Macula?" and the Foundation is holding its Annual Fundraising Dinner on Friday 30 May 2008 as the highlight of the week. The MD Foundation would once again like to thank our supporters Blackmores, Novartis, Optometrists Association Australia and Bluedesk for their ongoing help and support.

During MD Awareness Week you can help spread the word by writing a letter to the editor of your local paper or phoning talkback radio to encourage people to have their eyes tested.

Congratulations Sir Jack Brabham

The MD Foundation congratulates a great hero and a wonderful supporter, Sir Jack Brabham, who was made an Officer of the Order of Australia, complementing his Order of the British Empire in 1966 and a knighthood in 1979.

Sir Jack Brabham, one of the world's greatest racing car drivers, has been involved with the Macular Degeneration Foundation and has helped the Foundation raise awareness of the disease.

This is the second time Sir Jack, the formula one world champion in 1959, 1960 and 1966, has been recognised on Australia Day. In 1966 he was named Australian of the year.

Low Vision Display Day

Thanks to all those who came to the Low Vision Display Day held at the Macular Degeneration Foundation office on Wednesday 13 February 2008. The day was a great success with 120 people attending to learn about low vision and the aids and technology available to help people maintain their independence.



Presenters who attended on the day include representatives from Guide Dogs; Vision Australia; Quantum Technology; Visitech; and Audio-Read. Sister Margaret Gannon also attended and spoke about her own experiences with low vision and the help she receives from low vision services and agencies.

The Foundation will hold more low vision days in the Sydney office on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 30 April, 2008**
- **Thursday 5 June, 2008**
- **Thursday 26 June, 2008**

RSVP to the Foundation on **1800 111 709** to reserve your place.

"Seriously, if you ever raced against Jack you'd really know you'd been in a race. He was everything we Poms have come to expect of a great Australian sportsman - play the game as if your life depends on it, no quarters asked."

Sir Stirling Moss
Legendary British Racing Driver