

## **NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS TEAM UP TO FIGHT A GROWING HEALTH CONCERN**

Parkinson's Australia and Alzheimer's Australia have developed a unique educational kit which addresses the issue of Parkinson's and Lewy Body Dementia. The DVD and booklet will be launched in September as part of National Parkinson's Awareness Week. The theme for the launch is **Speak Up, Speak Out**.

Up to 30 per cent of people with dementia may have Lewy Body Dementia. Currently there are more than 54,700 people living with Parkinson's. Up to 40 per cent of these people may develop Lewy Body Dementia.

The kit, the first of its kind for an Australian audience, is the result of a Federal government initiative to encourage collaborative partnerships between key community-based organizations. Parkinson's Australia and Alzheimer's Australia are the peak bodies for the two leading neurological conditions affecting Australians.

Lewy Body Dementia is a specific condition that combines Parkinsonisms – physical symptoms such as slow movements, stiffness of limbs and difficulty walking, with dementia-type symptoms, specifically visual hallucinations, fluctuating confusions and agitation, as well as memory and thinking difficulties.

Misdiagnosis and the lack of professional and sensitive information and education about the condition typically result in poor symptom management and enhance the fear and confusion of those diagnosed, which significantly impacts on quality of life.

The specific nature of the condition requires a similarly specific and holistic approach to symptom management.

The education kit is the ideal introduction to the condition for those recently diagnosed and their family and/or carer. It aims to specifically address the current lack of information, while providing details about available and relevant support services.

### **EVENT DETAILS**

**What:** *Speak up, Speak out*, launch of Parkinson's and Lewy Body Dementia education kit.

**When:** 10.00am, Thursday 6 September, 2007 (during National Parkinson's Awareness Week)

**Where:** The Pavillion at Watermark Bar, Tenancy 9, 800 Bourke Street, The Promenade, Victoria Harbour, Docklands

**Media interviews:** Interviews and photo opportunities on the day can be arranged through Judith Mooney. Professor Bob Iansek will officially launch the kit and VIP attendees will include health professionals featured in the DVD.

ENDS...

Media enquiries:

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