

PARKINSON'S DISEASE: Just the Facts

- An estimated **6.3 million people** around the world have Parkinson's disease (PD).
- Between **54,000 and 80,000 Australians** have PD. Numbers are increasing 4% per year and will double by 2025.
- Over 8,900 people were diagnosed in 2005.
- **25 people** are diagnosed **every day of the year**.
- 1 in 5 people diagnosed are of working age.
- PD can affect adults of any age.
- **PD is the second most common neurological condition** in Australia. It is a chronic, progressive, incurable complex and disabling neurological condition.
- There is **no known cause or cure**. Medication is available to treat the symptoms

SYMPTOMS & IMPACTS

Symptoms and levels of severity can vary greatly from person to person.

The **four major symptoms** are:

- **Tremor:** trembling in hands, arms, legs, jaw or face
- **Rigidity:** stiffness of the limbs or trunk. Facial expression may also become rigid and inflexible.
- Slowness or **loss of spontaneous movement**.
- **Postural instability:** impaired balance and coordination, resulting in falls and injury.

Other Parkinson's symptoms may include:

- Depression • Dementia • Memory loss
- Difficulty swallowing & chewing • Speech changes
- Urinary problems & constipation
- Sexual difficulties • Sleep problems

- People suffer **disrupted family and personal relationships**, many withdraw from social and leisure activities.

- Parkinson's **impacts on employment**.

BURDEN OF DISEASE

- PD costs Australia **6.8 billion dollars annually**.
- The replacement cost of informal care provided to people with Parkinson's is \$350 million per year.

THE FUNDING INEQUITY

A survey of Victorians with Parkinson's indicated their major issues were:

- Poor medication management while in hospitals, nursing homes or respite centres.
- Lack of access to Parkinson's specialist health professionals
- Funding is needed to provide Parkinson's education to community health professionals
- Lack of funding for specialist services in regional and remote Victoria
- Limited access to respite care and the need for improved quality of care
- Increase funds for Parkinson's research

Parkinson's Victoria receives only \$180,000 recurrent government funding each year to provide services. This is inadequate.

We ask that the state government invest \$1.5 million in services to help address these issues. This will improve medication management, enable people to remain in their own homes longer, reduce hospital admissions, enhance employment and community participation, and slow the growth in the economic cost of Parkinson's in Australia.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Make a donation.** Call 1800 644189 or access our web site www.parkinsonsvic.org.au for more information
- Remember Parkinson's Victoria in your will
- Participate in our fundraising activities
- Volunteer your time

Source: Access Economics Report *Living with Parkinson's Disease*, commissioned by Parkinson's Australia, 2007 and Parkinson's Victoria.