



Media Release

SPINALCURE APPLAUDS NSW GOVT INVESTMENT IN SPINAL INJURY RESEARCH

Sunday 16 June 2019 (Embargoed until 9am)

SpinalCure Australia (SpinalCure), the peak national organisation funding spinal injury research, is delighted with the announcement, by the NSW Treasurer the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP, of a \$15 million investment in spinal cord injury research.

“There are exciting developments happening globally and we want to ensure that Australians can benefit as soon as possible from breakthrough research. We are really grateful that the Government realises how important this funding is right now.

“When it comes to spinal cord injury research, scientists now believe it is no longer a matter of if, but when, there will be a cure. This investment by the NSW Government is a potential ‘game changer’ in our world because it coincides with exciting research breakthroughs,” Duncan Wallace, CEO SpinalCure, said.

Every day a new person in Australia has a spinal injury. Most injuries involve young people who, until recently, faced the rest of their lives in a wheelchair. But emerging treatments - such as minimising the body’s inflammatory response after the injury; electrical stimulation to the spinal cord (known as neurostimulation) and stem cell treatments – are likely to end that life sentence.

“This research field is undergoing huge transformation. This investment enables NSW to take a leading role in advancing the therapies that are changing the outlook of those with spinal injuries”, Mr. Wallace said.

“Unlike those suffering from many other conditions, people with a spinal cord injury can’t rely on surgery, a pill or a lifestyle change to cure us. Investing in research is our only hope,” Joanna Knott, Co-founder and Chair of SpinalCure, said.

Investing in research aims to improve patient health outcomes but also help to address the staggering cost to the Australian economy, estimated to be in excess of \$2.5-3 billion p.a.¹

¹ Access Economics, June 2009. Adjusted estimates for 2018



with an estimated current national liability of at least \$20 billion², of which 32% (\$6.4 bn) is borne by NSW. The estimated lifetime direct care cost for a complete quadriplegic is between \$5 million - \$12 million³.

Ends

CONTACT

For further information or to arrange interviews:

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² The cost of spinal cord injury and its sensitivity to change in outcomes. John Walsh, April 2017

³ Lifetime Care 2018.