

Media Release

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Polio Awareness Month Sheds Light on Polio Survivors and Post-Polio Conditions

Melbourne, 21 September 2023 — October is Polio Awareness Month, an annual global initiative dedicated to celebrating the resilience of polio survivors in our communities, and the raising of awareness about the importance of polio vaccination. In addition to highlighting the often-overlooked challenges faced by those affected by polio and the impact of worldwide polio eradication efforts, the month also emphasises the need to educate healthcare professionals about post-polio conditions.

The Untold Stories of People Who Have Been Affected by Polio

While great strides have been made in the global fight against acute polio infection, it is crucial to remember that many people who had polio are still living with the effects of the disease. These survivors not only embody strength and determination but also serve as a reminder of the enduring impact of polio.

People previously infected by the polio virus often develop post-polio conditions - a cluster of post-viral symptoms that can emerge decades after their initial recovery. These symptoms, which include muscle weakness, severe fatigue, and complex chronic pain, can significantly affect people's quality of life and their participation in our communities. This Polio Awareness Month, we stand with those affected and seek to raise awareness of their challenges and tap into the wisdom of their lived experiences.

Educating People Affected by Polio and Healthcare Professionals on Post-Polio Conditions

Polio survivors require current information about Late Effects of Polio and need specialised care and understanding from healthcare professionals. To support this, Polio Australia and polio support groups will host educational webinars and workshops throughout October. These will equip those affected by polio and their healthcare providers with the knowledge needed to ensure well-informed and low-risk health decision-making occurs in the course of care.

These events will feature experts in the field, who will share insights into recognizing and managing post-polio conditions, empowering those who may be unaware of the condition and the risks faced by those who were infected with polio.

Join the Campaign

Join us during Polio Awareness Month to make a difference in the lives of those living a life impacted by polio and contribute to the global effort to eradicate this debilitating disease. Here's how you can participate:

Spread Awareness: Share survivor stories and educational resources on your social media platforms using #PolioAwarenessMonth.

Attend Webinars and Workshops: People affected by polio and healthcare professionals are encouraged to participate in our educational events to better understand post-polio conditions. Please find a link to the events organised, here www.polioaustralia.org.au/world-polio-day-2023/

Support Survivor Initiatives: Connect with local organizations and support groups dedicated to assisting polio survivors in your community.

Together, we can ensure that those affected by polio are not forgotten, and that their unique challenges are acknowledged and addressed. For more information about Polio Awareness Month events and resources, please visit www.polioaustralia.org.au/polio-awareness-month-2023/.

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About Polio Australia and Polio Awareness Month:

Polio Australia is a not-for-profit organisation committed to standardising quality post-polio information across Australia. Our vision is that all polio survivors in Australia have access to appropriate health care and the support required to maintain independence and make informed life choices.

Polio Awareness Month, which began in 2010 in Australia, is an annual campaign dedicated to raising awareness about polio, its prevention through vaccination, and the challenges faced by polio survivors, including post-polio conditions. The campaign aims to educate the public and healthcare professionals, foster support for polio survivor initiatives, and contribute to the global efforts to eradicate polio once and for all.