

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Cystic Fibrosis Queensland celebrates its Diamond Jubilee

Cystic Fibrosis Queensland is celebrating its diamond jubilee, 60 years of providing support, services and hope to those fighting cystic fibrosis.

Cystic fibrosis is the most common, life-shortening genetic chronic illness in Australia. It attacks the lungs, airway passages and pancreas – slowly shutting down the organs.

One Australian child is born with cystic fibrosis every week. There is no cure.

Cystic Fibrosis Queensland CEO Petrina Fraccaro said cystic fibrosis now affects the lives of more adults and children than ever before.

“In the last 10 years, life expectancy for cystic fibrosis sufferers has been extended from 18 years to just short of 40 years.

“However, that means that the number of people requiring our help, both today and projected in the future has increased,” Ms Fraccaro said.

“Our mission is *lives unaffected by cystic fibrosis* and we assist everyone affected by cystic fibrosis to live fuller, healthier lives.”

Today, Cystic Fibrosis Queensland supports more 1,000 families compared to 730 families 10 years ago.

Sunshine Coast local Peter Stewart was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at a young age after the heart-breaking death of his older sister revealed she had the condition.

“My mother felt I had similar symptoms to my sister and sort to get me tested, babies weren’t tested for cystic fibrosis back then like they are now through the simple heel prick test,” Mr Stewart said.

“Over the years my lung capacity had kept decreasing until I was put on the transplant list and at age 56 I received a new set of lungs.

“I still have cystic fibrosis and undergo treatment including daily medication, physiotherapy and I swim every day but I’ve gained years to spend with my wife and family.”

Mr Stewart sits on the Board of Cystic Fibrosis Queensland and believes it is crucial that cystic fibrosis sufferers and their families have a voice.

“I believe Cystic Fibrosis Queensland is invaluable by not just funding research, carrying out advocacy and increasing awareness but also providing practical support to sufferers by way of airway clearance equipment, respite programs and providing subsidies to help with the financial burden of chronic illness,” he said.

“Over the years I have seen Cystic Fibrosis Queensland grow and adapt to what cystic fibrosis sufferers need and require as the research progresses.

“Cystic Fibrosis Queensland was integral to upgrading Adult Cystic Fibrosis Centre at The Prince Charles Hospital to abide by infection control as the research showed that cystic fibrosis sufferers can pass very harmful bacteria between each other.”

Mr Stewart will be participating in Cystic Fibrosis Queensland’s Great Strides Redcliffe event, a 5km fun run/walk on Saturday 14 March at Suttons Beach Park – Marine Parade.

Ms Fraccaro said the organisation is one of Queensland’s largest and oldest charities supporting people living with chronic illness.

“We advocate for the entire cystic fibrosis community and seek to raise much needed awareness of this debilitating condition.

“The fundraising we undertake accounts for 90 percent of our revenue needs to deliver these programs, so we rely heavily on support from the community.”

To celebrate Cystic Fibrosis Queensland’s diamond jubilee, a perpetuity account is being established to secure the long-term future of the organisation. 60 founding members are being sort to donate \$1,000 each to establish a \$60,000 perpetuity account.

Diamond Jubilee Donors Club members will be announced and thanked for their vital contribution to the long-term future of Cystic Fibrosis Queensland at the Diamond Jubilee Cocktail Party in July as well as invited to our Patron event and listed in the annual report, on the website and name placed on the Diamond Jubilee Donors Club plaque.

If you would like to donate to Cystic Fibrosis Queensland visit <https://www.cysticfibrosis.org.au/qld/donate>

## **About Cystic Fibrosis Queensland**

Cystic Fibrosis Queensland is the peak community not for profit charity working with and for the increasing number of people living with cystic fibrosis who attend a Queensland Health Clinic for treatment. The charity funds research, advocates on the behalf of and delivers support and service programs to people and their families with cystic fibrosis. 90% of our income relies on fundraising.

**ENDS**



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