

Media Release

April 4, 2019

## **MSWA uniting the community to support people living with Parkinson's Disease**

This World Parkinson's Day - Thursday, 11 April, MSWA is proud to continue its commitment to raising awareness of Parkinson's and uniting Western Australians who have been touched by the condition.

Parkinson's is a long-term degenerative disorder of the central nervous system. While the symptoms generally come on slowly, they can include shaking, rigidity, slowness of movement and difficulty walking. There are approximately 80,000 people living with Parkinson's in Australia and 4,000 in Western Australia.

The average age of diagnosis is 65 and there is currently no known cause or cure for the condition. Each person is affected differently, and the rate of progression varies greatly between individuals.

MSWA Client Brian Dawson is just one of the many Western Australians who now benefit from MSWA's support for people living with a neurological condition. Brian was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2010 at the age of 50.

"My diagnosis came as a shock to me. My speech was beginning to fail, I had a tremor in my hand and swallowing had become difficult."

"Through the help of MSWA and an NDIS plan, I was able to access vital services including physiotherapy, speech pathology and occupational therapy, which gave me the support I needed to adapt to the condition," Brian said.

MSWA physiotherapist Ben Matthews has seen first-hand how physical therapy can greatly improve mobility and quality of life for people living with neurological conditions. He is one of a team of highly qualified MSWA 'physios' who provide therapy services to people living with Parkinson's and other conditions.

"Every person I treat requires a different program of exercises to address their impairments. At MSWA we treat people, not conditions and we maintain a holistic focus on a person's care and wellbeing," Ben said.

"What I love most about working with MSWA Clients like Brian is the opportunity to help change and ultimately improve their lives."

To acknowledge World Parkinson's Day, MSWA will host 'Yoga in the Park' – a yoga class in the serene Kings Park featuring Mel Howard from yoga studio Twisting Peacock, and Grammy Award winning Maori instrument specialist Jerome Kavanagh.

Show your support for Parkinson's by registering for the event, or by simply making a donation.

All funds raised will go directly to MSWA to provide support and services for Western Australians living with Parkinson's Disease.

For more information, to register or donate, head to <https://mswa.org.au/support-your-cause/events/world-parkinsons-day>.

**Ends**

### **About MSWA**

MSWA provides vital support and services to people living with all neurological conditions in Western Australia, including multiple sclerosis, stroke, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Disease, Motor Neurone Disease and acquired Brain Injury.

MSWA has a team of more than 750 staff who work passionately to provide the best possible care to people across the Perth metro area and broader regional centres of Western Australia.

MSWA plays a vital role in educating the broader community, liaising with government and other relevant bodies on related issues, and advocating for the rights of all people with neurological conditions.

### **Media contact**

Libby Cassidy  
Brand & Communications Manager, MSWA  
P: 6454 3118  
M: 0424 136 560  
E: [libby.cassidy@mswa.org.au](mailto:libby.cassidy@mswa.org.au)