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June 23, 2016

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

LYME DISEASE

HAP recognises Lyme disease as medical condition that can be contracted by the general Australian population, and not just a possible diagnosis in returned travellers who may have acquired the infection whilst visiting overseas endemic areas.

Many Australians are testing positive to Lyme disease and its co-infections, however are often unable to access affordable medical treatment for their condition/s due to the lack of recognition of the disease. As a consequence, their medical conditions often progress to an advanced stage where they can become seriously and unnecessarily impaired, which affects their ability to work and their quality of life.

HAP is concerned that the Australian public has not been made aware of the potential risks of exposure to Lyme disease from ticks and other possible vectors and modes of transmission, and that a national health policy has not been developed to address treatment issues.

HAP supports the completion of the 2015 Senate Inquiry into Lyme disease and Lyme like illnesses, which was initiated by Victorian Senator John Madigan. An interim report was produced, but we believe it is essential to complete the inquiry to gain a full understanding of the condition, other similar conditions, its prevalence in Australia, and as a basis to develop an effective national health policy.

