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Media Statement

THE BID TO BETTER TREAT BRAIN INJURIES: A PUBLIC SEMINAR

WA's world-renowned research program which has uncovered key pieces of the neurotrauma puzzle is preparing to host a public seminar during Brain Injury Awareness Week in September.

The lunchtime seminar 'The Bid to Better Treat Brain Injuries' takes place on Friday September 21 at QEII Medical Centre from midday and will highlight personal perspectives on brain injury, as well as detail a new research project.

Louise Daw, executive officer of the Neurotrauma Research Program (NRP) based at the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR), said the seminar sought to bring into focus the terrible consequences of neurotrauma.

"More than 6,000 West Australians are already living with the effects of traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries and the impact on them, their family and friends is far reaching," she said.

"And, because road crashes are a leading cause of these type of injuries, the very sad reality is that many people affected are aged in their teens and twenties."

Two survivors of brain injury, Bassendean father-of-two John Tassicker and Amanda Just of Woodlands will also address the seminar.

A TAFE lecturer, Mr Tassicker suffered a stroke in February 2005 and spent several months in rehabilitation.

While his road to recovery has been challenging, John's incredible determination has seen him realise many important goals.

"Since my stroke, it's been a long process of rehabilitation and I've spent many hours in physiotherapy," he said.

"I've also been impacted by epilepsy and fatigue is a constant companion, but the key thing for others in similar situations to hold on to is knowing that life does go on – I've recently begun sailing again, which is my great passion and I know I will reach my dream to visit Antarctica."

Ms Just, who experienced a severe head injury in a car accident in November 2005, will also share her inspirational story.

After undergoing a number of months rehabilitation, Amanda has made a remarkable recovery and now leads an independent life.

In May 2006, the Western Australian Government confirmed its faith in WAIMR and the NRP, injecting a further \$8 million over five years into the program. This wonderful financial support is enabling significant enhancement and expansion of the NRP, bringing the day when medicine can go some way to repairing and regenerating injured brain and spinal cord tissue ever closer.

Brain Injury Awareness Week runs from September 17 to 21.

Seminar places are limited. To reserve your seat, please call Louise Daw on 0418 911 878.

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