



Media Release

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Almost 20% of disabled people have not had any social contact in the last 3 months

“The heartbreaking truth is that people who have a disability, such as muscular dystrophy, are often socially isolated and can go months on end without a friendly visit because it is too physically difficult to leave the house,” said Muscular Dystrophy Australia’s Executive Director, Boris M Struk.

A recent paper released by the Productivity Commission ‘*Deep and Persistent Disadvantage in Australia*’ found that 13% of people with a disability have experienced deep social exclusion.

The paper also found that around 18 per cent of people with profound limitations, such as a disability, had not had any social contact in the last three months and 59 per cent had not had a telephone call for that same period.

“Social isolation is a huge issue within the disability sector that needs to be addressed because we are talking about human beings who are just like everyone else who want friends to visit and share a laugh over a cuppa,” said Boris.

“In a lot of cases it is far too difficult for most people with MD to leave the house so if they live by themselves they are alone for most of their days but even if they live with family members they can be left by themselves all day while everyone is out at work or social engagements.”

“I have seen this happen too many times, where it just becomes a routine of loneliness.”

“While many have family members who visit for special occasions, it is a friend that is missing from their lives because when you don’t get out of the house, how are you expected to form new friendships.”

Muscular Dystrophy Australia has established a network of social volunteers ‘The MDAngels’ to visit the homes of people with MD to have a chat over a coffee and break this cycle of societal exclusion.

“Even if our volunteers just pop over for an hour and play a game of cards, the positive benefit is enormous.”

“There are no personal care duties; it is the simple act of catching up and showing that you care enough to ensure a person with a disability knows they’re not alone and that someone cares.”

To volunteer as an MDAngel and make a difference in the lives of a person with muscular dystrophy, please contact MDA on (03) 9320 9555 or email Courtney.Burger@mda.org.au.

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