



Media Release

PAYCE manager walks for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Campaign Awareness

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PAYCE Project Manager walks to Canberra to raise funds for a cure for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is a debilitating disease that causes progressive degeneration of muscle and skeletal tissue resulting in increasing loss of motor functions, heart and respiratory functions which effectively shortens the lifespan of afflicted.

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is one of the most common forms of the disease affecting approximately 1 in 3,500 young males and is due to deficiencies of dystrophin, a protein involved in maintaining the integrity of muscle tissue.

At present there is no known cure for this aggressive genetically transmitted condition.

DMD, being a genetically transmitted disease, is not thoroughly understood at present, but medical understanding of the condition is improving continually as research progresses.

Save Our Sons is a charity organisation set up in 2008 by Elie Eid and his Ten year old son Emilio. The aim of the organisation is to raise public awareness of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and to raise a further \$3.5million over the next 2 years to fund research into clinical trials that hold potential for positively improving the lives of DMD sufferers.

Since 2008 the organisation has grown and annually hosts spectacular fund raising events often attended by celebrity supporters. Over the years, the kind support of corporations such as PAYCE, as well as sports stars, celebrities and media personalities including Alan Jones, Ray Hadley, Sam Kekovich, Angry Anderson, Jeff Fenech, Amanda Keller, Brendan Jones and many others, have furthered research into DMD in the UK and US, and SOS

hope to see clinical trials begin in Australia.

On the 1st of May 2015, Elie Eid and his son Emilio took their wheelchair and set out from Sydney determined to push and walk and wheel the 320km road to Parliament House in Canberra, in a determined show of strength, courage and endurance.

On the 12th of May 2015, the rain-soaked, windblown team of celebrity support and SOS founders Elie Eid and Emilio walked and wheeled their way into the City of Canberra. After photos on the lawn, they wheeled up the steps of Parliament House and through the doors, looking for the Prime Minister.

A word from PAYCE's man on the ground...

PAYCE Project manager Michael Malak walked into a typically cold night in Canberra to the lights of Budget night.

Michael, eight kilos lighter, had lost count of the blisters he had on his feet but was feeling no pain after walking the 320 kilometres from Sydney to Canberra.

He had joined the group 'Save Our Sons', walking to raise money and awareness for the disease – Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

DMD is a fatal condition that mostly affects boys.

"This walk was such a humbling experience for me," he said.

"It was a real triumph for all of us to make it the distance."

The group set off on May 1 with father and founder of the charity Elie Eid leading the fundraising group.

He pushed his son – a DMD sufferer – in his wheelchair to Parliament House in Canberra where they arrived on May 12.

The disease causes aggressive muscle degeneration that leads to the inability to walk and eventually death.

Several celebrities also joined the walked to assist raise awareness, including former rugby league player and media identity Mark Geyer and hard rocker Angry Anderson.

"It was such a wonderful experience to be part of this group raising awareness about an incredibly debilitating disease," Michael said.

"I am really grateful to PAYCE and Managing Director Brian Boyd for giving me the opportunity to participate in the walk."

The group set off in pouring rain in Sydney and arrived just in time for the Budget at Parliament House.

The crew walked up to 30 kilometres per day.

"We had some very long and wet days in the beginning, but as we got down the highway I got into a routine," he said.

"We decided most days just to take a short stop at lunchtime and finished walking around 3pm."

"I can tell you I have never been so happy to see Canberra on a cold winter's night," he said.

"We had a great welcoming party."

Brian Boyd impressed by the mammoth marathon

Brian Boyd – Managing Director of PAYCE expressed his gratitude to Michael Malak as the Save Our Sons team wandered triumphantly into Canberra. "Our thanks go to Michael Malak who has done us proud by participating in this gruelling and heroic event", said Mr. Brian Boyd.

"Dushenne Muscular Dystrophy is a tragic burden on our young people, and we at PAYCE are honoured to be part of the contribution to find a cure", remarked Mr Boyd.

"Personally, I hold a high regard for all the people who participated in this effort to raise public awareness, this is what it takes and this is what makes Australians great, it was an extraordinary effort, well done everybody", said Brian Boyd.

Meeting with the Prime Minister

Even though the Prime Minister Tony Abbott was busy with Budget night he still managed to give time to Elie and his son.

"Given it was such a busy night it was amazing that he gave time to meet Elie and provide support to the charity," he said.

Elie has already helped raise \$3.5 million to fund clinical trials for a cure.

The group will provide information to parliamentarians on the clinical trials to date.

To donate got to <https://fundraise.giveeasy.org/campaigns/walk-to-save-our-sons/> or text WALK to 0438 744 919 to donate \$5