

## MEDIA STATEMENT

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Thursday, June 10, 2010

International Men's Health Week 2010: Much More to Men's Health than Diet and Exercise

### Happy Relationships Lead to Healthy Men reveals MensLine Australia

Crisis Support Services Inc., providers of MensLine Australia, are urging Australian men to consider more than their physical health during International Men's Health Week (June 14 -20, 2010), affirming that the health of a man's relationships has a direct effect on his personal health and wellbeing.

The 2010 Men's Health Week message is loud and clear – Australian men need take a proactive approach to their health in order to live long, happy and healthy lives. But there's much more to men's health than diet and exercise - healthy men have healthy relationships.

MensLine Australia Program Leader, Randal Newton-John said that international research had proven that there is a direct, positive correlation between good relationships and good health.

"A breakthrough US study (Waite,L. "*Marital Biography and Health*") revealed that **relationship breakdown has direct links to the male lifespan, with the chance of living beyond the age of 65 years being a mere 65 per cent in divorced men, compared with 90 per cent in married men,**" said Newton-John.

**MensLine Australia – a free, professional, 24/7 helpline for Australian men - receives an average of 55,000 calls each year, with more than 40 per cent of calls coming from men struggling with separation.**

"Many men who call MensLine Australia for support after a relationship breakdown report symptoms of physical and mental illness, from depression and anxiety, to thoughts of suicide, misuse of drugs and alcohol, and an inability to concentrate, sleep or eat.

"Alarmingly, **suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in Australian men, with relationship breakdown, isolation, depression and substance abuse being the primary risk factors. We know that the risk of suicide in men is eight times higher than that of women, resulting in the tragic loss of more than 1700 Australian men to suicide a year,**" said Newton-John.

In the recently released National Male Health Policy, the Australian Government further emphasizes the important impact relationships and fathering have on men's health, and encourages Australian men to seek professional support in dealing with the fallout of relationship issues or breakdown.

"We need men to recognise there are many ways to improve their health; developing and maintaining close relationships plays a critical role in this, as does addressing the personal pain and stress that result from a relationship breakdown," urged Newton-John.

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*MensLine Australia* is committed to helping Australian men to improve their health and wellbeing by supporting them to improve their relationships and break the cycle of isolation. Professional counsellors offer

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**Crisis Support Services Inc. (CSS) is Australia's leading professional telephone counselling and training provider. Operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, CSS is fully accredited in counselling and suicide prevention, with a 50 year history of helping people in crisis.**

confidential support, information and referral, 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the cost of a local call. The service is accessible nationwide by calling **1300 78 99 78**.

In the spirit of Men's Health Week, and in recognition of the important interplay between men's health and their relationship, *MensLine Australia* will be providing all callers with a complimentary copy of "*Renovate Your Relationships*" - a manual written especially for men, with a focus on maintaining strong, healthy relationships between men and their partners\*. This is an essential tool for any man looking to improve his relationships, and his health. Call 1300 78 99 78 or visit [www.menslineaus.org.au](http://www.menslineaus.org.au) for your free copy.

\* Offer limited to callers during the month of June.

**MensLine Australia – 1300 78 99 78**

**Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, across Australia.**

[www.menslineaus.org.au](http://www.menslineaus.org.au)

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