

# fund raising

As we get closer to our goal, the need for **money** becomes more important.

We need your help **URGENTLY**.

**WE KNOW Lions can be extremely generous.**

Just \$200 from each club would make a world of difference.

**JUST \$200** from each club in Australia will help find the cure!

**PLEASE**, consider the Fellowship whenever your club is looking to support a worthwhile Lions Project.



There are 365 wheelchairs in this picture. Spinal cord injury in Australia will fill at least one of these every day.



## Lions Australia Spinal Cord Fellowship

"ONE SMALL STEP ..."



partners with a common goal....



LASCF | Lions Australia Spinal Cord Fellowship

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## the facts



Spinal Cord Injury affects over 20,000 Australians with over 300 new cases every year. The average age at injury is 42 with 8 out of 10 being male. In addition to paralysis, victims of severe SCI often suffer loss of sensation, bladder / bowel and sexual dysfunction, and debilitating pain syndromes.

The two leading causes of SCI are motor vehicle accidents (47%) and falls in persons over 65 years old (27%). Despite advances in rehab, the quality of life for SCI victims is poor.

At present there are no clinically approved spinal cord repair therapies – particularly for long-term chronic SCI.

The cost of these injuries is staggering, exceeding \$2 billion each year for Australia alone.

## the fellowship



StepAhead Australia is the premiere foundation in Australia searching for an effective SCI therapy and the Fellowship is dedicated to helping them.

Professor Terence O'Brien, Head of the Dept. of Neuroscience, Monash University has agreed to be a Lions Australia Spinal Cord Fellowship holder.

Prof. O'Brien is also the director of the Neurology Clinical Trial Facility at the Alfred Hospital, the largest trauma centre in the southern hemisphere.



## current research

Traumatic spinal cord injury results in the loss of many neurons, support cells, and the failure of severed nerve fibres to regenerate across sites of injury and re-establish neural circuits.

Award winning studies from the Davies research team, recently moved to Monash University, have shown that infusion of a protein called Decorin into the spinal cord is highly effective at preventing the formation of growth inhibitory scar tissue, allowing nerve fibres to cross Decorin treated injuries.

In addition, Decorin induces the injured spinal cord to make enzymes that can actively breakdown scar tissue - results that have been verified in the UK. In seeking means of delivering Decorin to patients, the Davies team have discovered that infusion of human Decorin to cerebro-spinal fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord in experimental studies can promote robust nerve fibre sprouting, formation of neural connections (called synapses) and recovery of movement – even in chronic SCI.

Importantly, the Davies team and biotech partners recently acquired exclusive access to the worlds best pharmaceutical grade Decorin and with support from Lions Australia, the exciting prospect of conducting Decorin SCI trials in Australia can now become a reality in the very near future.

“ONE SMALL STEP ...”