

# firstline

Winter 2015

Positive insights into better healthcare PR  
Quarterly news from Palin Communications

## Pop up urinals promote prostate health



**Campaign ambassador Sam Newman 'opens' the pop up urinals for International Men's Health Week.**

It's not easy to get older men to visit their doctor. Especially for a condition like benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) which causes embarrassing urinary symptoms. The condition affects 1 in 3 Aussie men over the age of 50 but goes largely untreated because men think it's just a sign of old age. The Palin Communications team took on the challenge to raise awareness of BPH

for the GSK-sponsored 'More than Once a Night' man campaign.

Palin Communications enlisted footy legend and commentator Sam Newman (The Footy Show) as campaign ambassador. He starred in a humorous video where he took on the BPH challenge. He had to find a toilet urgently every time an alarm on his phone went off, thereby experiencing the symptoms of BPH.

The first day of International Men's Health Week on the 15th of June 2015 was the backdrop for the campaign activation. The Palin team installed 'More than once a night' urinals in Melbourne's Federation Square to draw attention to the plight of men needing to find a toilet multiple times a day. Sam cut a ribbon to officially open the urinals and spoke about the importance of regular health checks.

Channel 9 covered the event and a range of seniors, men's health, and radio and sports publications wrote about the campaign and shared the video. The ongoing campaign has generated over 1.2 million opportunities to see the key messages and Sam's 'More than once

a night man' video has had over 1,200 views across two YouTube channels.

For more information on the campaign visit: [www.morethanonceanight.com.au](http://www.morethanonceanight.com.au)

## How to win friends and influence people . . . get a pooch

Could owning a pet be the key to having more friends and building communities? Is having a dog or cat a practical way to address social isolation and loneliness experienced by many Australians?

Armed with cute pets stories and a press release Palin Communications was influencing the news agenda by highlighting new research by the University of Western Australia showed pet owners are more likely to meet new people and make meaningful friendships. The Pet Factor study showed pet owners are significantly more likely to get to know people in their neighborhood than non-pet owners. Dogs were found to be especially good at helping people become part of the community. Dog owners were five times more likely to get to know people in their neighbourhood compared with other pet owners.

The study, conducted in collaboration with the WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition, owned by Mars, concluded that pets may be an important factor in developing healthy neighbourhoods and a way to address social isolation experienced by some individuals.

Palin team mascot Edie the pug was unavailable for comment.



**New Australia-based research showed pets can help people make friends.**

## Tim Ferguson leads social campaign showcasing wins over multiple sclerosis

A social media initiative has been launched by Biogen Australia and Palin Communications that aims to reframe perceptions of people with multiple sclerosis by using videos to showcase their accomplishments. Biogen is one of the global leaders in the development of medicines for the treatment of multiple sclerosis.



**Ambassador Tim Ferguson features in a series of #MyMSVictory videos for the initiative.**

The initiative, called #MyMSVictory, is a month-long video and social media competition providing a platform for the MS community to share their successes, which includes everything from everyday achievements to amazing feats. The aim of #MyMSVictory is to showcase the everyday accomplishments of people living with MS – people with MS, their family members, friends and carers. It also seeks to show how MS is a disease that affects each person differently leading to a wide range of victories.

The #MyMSVictory initiative is being supported in Australia by MS Australia - the national peak body representing people affected by multiple sclerosis and has even garnered praise from the Multiple Sclerosis Society in the UK.

Campaign Ambassador Comedian Tim Ferguson is someone who can speak personally about the value of daily victories

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in dealing with MS. He features in the official campaign videos and will be the guest judge for the competition helping award thirteen prizes. All competition videos including the weekly winners can be viewed on the campaign website [www.mymsvictory.com.au](http://www.mymsvictory.com.au).

"For some people with MS, being able to walk around the block with their kids is that great achievement, for others it is competing in the Paralympics. #MyMSVictory is about recognising all the triumphs and achievements of individuals in the MS community," said Tim.

The campaign has featured on ABC News Breakfast, Channel 10's Studio 10 program and via 20 other media outlets since it launched on 1st July 2015. There have been 500+ social media posts about the competition including retweets from media personality Sandra Sully and former Disability Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innis. Over 30+ entries into the competition have been received.

Winning videos will be chosen after the competition closes on Friday 31st July 2015.

## Biogen highlights Oceans of Hope journey across Australia and New Zealand

Oceans of Hope, a 67-foot yacht undertaking the first global (33,000 nautical miles) circumnavigation with a working crew that includes people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) visited Auckland and Sydney in May 2015. Biogen is the official global partner of Sailing Sclerosis and the Oceans of Hope project. The Palin team worked with Biogen Australia to implement a proactive media relations program to support the Oceans of Hope project and its stops in Australia and New Zealand.

The aim of Oceans of Hope is to change perceptions of MS by showing what is possible when people with a chronic disease are empowered to conquer their individual challenges. Welcome events were coordinated around the Auckland and Sydney stops in partnership with the



**The Oceans of Hope crew sails past the Sydney Opera House on World MS Day.**

key MS groups in each area including MS Australia, MS Ltd, MS Auckland and MS New Zealand. The Auckland activity was coordinated in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of MS Auckland (8th May) and the yacht sailed into Darling Harbour just in time for World MS Day (27th May).

Dynamic footage of the travels was captured in each stop and over 127 taster sailings were conducted with members of the MS community across the two countries.

Media feedback was extremely positive with 39 stories generated achieving a reach of over 1.1 million opportunities to see messaging about the initiative. There was also significant social media conversation from stakeholders and partner groups achieving an estimated social reach of over 300,000.

Managing Director of Biogen in Australia and New Zealand, Joerg Hermans, said the company was delighted to be sponsoring such a ground-breaking project in MS.

"Biogen is all about caring deeply and helping people with MS to change their lives. The Oceans of Hope project is certainly a global embodiment of those principles for us," said Mr Hermans.

## Westfund takes on regional health with launch of new initiatives

Regionally-based health insurer Westfund Health and the Palin team put regional health and community issues front and centre with the launch of two

new community initiatives in regional Queensland and New South Wales.

Palin helped to launch Westfund's Here for Hearts program, a community initiative in partnership with the Defibshop, set to make Automated External Defibrillators (AED) more accessible to regional communities for use in cardiac emergencies. The program was rolled out across regional New South Wales and Queensland over 4 months, with all Westfund's Care Centres being fitted with an AED.

The initiative also offered local schools and community groups a chance to apply to Westfund for AED purchase support. Westfund committed to matching the winning applicants AED fundraising, dollar for dollar. The program saw incredible success, each of the regional launch ceremonies received media attention, with many being featured on both regional television (WIN TV) and in the various local papers.

Westfund also launched the inaugural Health Hero initiative, aimed at showcasing and recognizing the incredible people making a difference to the wellbeing and health of their local communities. The competition, which ran from April to June, encouraged regional communities to nominate and vote for outstanding members of their community who had made an impact on the health of the local region. A grand prize of \$1000 was donated to the winning nominee's chosen community organisation or charity. There were over 30 nominations for coaches, teachers, and personal trainers all receiving well-deserved recognition for their contribution to the community.



**Westfund's Here for Hearts initiative on the front page of Dubbo's Daily Liberal .**

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