



MEDIA RELEASE

Allergy experts showcase progress and call for better national data collection on allergic disease

As Australians complete the Census, Australia's leading allergy experts are calling for better national allergy data to help shape future policy, planning and care.

The [National Allergy Council \(NAC\)](#) and the [National Allergy Centre of Excellence \(NACE\)](#) will bring together leading clinicians, researchers, consumer advocates, parliamentarians and people with lived experience at Parliament House today to highlight national progress in allergy research, prevention, care, education and support, while outlining the next priorities for improving outcomes for Australians living with allergic disease.

The event will also launch Australia's first Parliamentary Friends of Allergy group and release *Allergy Update 2026*, which outlines national achievements since 2022 and the next priorities for improving allergy prevention, care, education and research.

National Allergy Council Chief Executive Officer Dr Sandra Vale said better national allergy data was the next step in improving policy, planning and care for Australians living with allergic disease.

"Australia has made significant progress in tackling allergic disease, and the next step is ensuring we have the national data needed to guide future policy and care. Despite around one in three Australians living with an allergic condition, the Census does not currently collect information on allergic disease. Including it in future national data collections would help governments and health services better understand its prevalence and impact, informing future policy, planning, research and investment."

For Melbourne mother Luda Unitt, allergic disease is deeply personal. Her nine-year-old son Lucas lives with asthma, hay fever, eosinophilic oesophagitis and multiple life-threatening food allergies, including dairy, egg, sesame, tree nuts, most legumes, avocado and kiwi fruit. After experiencing anaphylaxis as a baby, every meal, birthday party, school excursion and family holiday now requires careful planning.

"You never stop being vigilant," Ms Unitt said. "Every meal, every social event and every new situation comes with questions about whether Lucas will be safe. It's something we think about every day."

Lucas's experience reflects the reality for around one in three Australians living with allergic disease. Allergic disease is one of the nation's fastest-growing chronic health conditions and is estimated to cost Australia \$18.9 billion each year in financial losses, in addition to \$44.6 billion in wellbeing losses.

The showcase will also highlight the progress made since the National Allergy Council (a partnership between the [Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy](#) and [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia](#)) and the National Allergy Centre of Excellence began working together in 2022.

Professor Kirsten Perrett, Director of the National Allergy Centre of Excellence, hosted at Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and a paediatric allergist, said the past three years had demonstrated what could be achieved through national collaboration.

"Together, we've strengthened allergy prevention, trained the next generation of allergy researchers, improved access to specialist expertise and built a nationally coordinated research network that is improving care for Australians living with allergic disease," Professor Perrett said.

"We welcome the establishment of Australia's first Parliamentary Friends of Allergy group as an important step in maintaining this momentum and strengthening collaboration to improve outcomes for Australians living with allergic disease."

Co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Allergy, Dr Mike Freeland MP, said allergic disease deserved the same attention in national data collections as other chronic health conditions.

"I am pleased to be a Co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Allergy Group being launched today," Dr Freeland said. "Allergic disease is a growing chronic condition, and we need to progress towards capturing good data on allergic disease, just as we do for other chronic conditions, through national data collections such as the Australian Census and National Health Survey."

Following the showcase, parliamentarians and Parliament House staff will have the opportunity to participate in skin prick testing for common airborne allergens alongside allergy education.

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Available for interview:

- Dr Sandra Vale, National Allergy Council Chief Executive Officer
- Professor Kirsten Perrett, National Allergy Centre of Excellence Director; paediatric allergist; MCRI Group Leader, Population Allergy
- Maria Said AM, Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia nominated Director and Co-chair of the National Allergy Council and A&AA Health Strategy and Advocacy Manager
- Professor Michaela Lucas, ASCIA nominated Director and Co-chair of the National Allergy Council and clinical immunology/allergy specialist
- Dr Michael O'Sullivan, ASCIA President and clinical immunology/allergy specialist
- Luda Unitt, of Malvern East, Melbourne, whose nine-year-old son, Lucas, lives with asthma, hay fever, eosinophilic oesophagitis and multiple life-threatening food allergies
- Personal case studies across Australia available on request

About the National Allergy Council (NAC):

The [National Allergy Council](#) is a partnership between the [Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCIA\)](#) and [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia \(A&AA\)](#), Australia's peak medical and patient support organisations for allergic disease. The National Allergy Council delivers evidence-based public health initiatives, education, training and support in consultation with key stakeholders to improve the health and wellbeing of people with allergic disease.

About the National Allergy Centre of Excellence (NACE):

The [National Allergy Centre of Excellence](#), hosted at Murdoch Children's Research Institute, is Australia's peak allergy research body. Backed by a national network of over 500 experts in drug, food, insect, and respiratory allergies, it is recognised as a European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) Advanced Research Centre and World Allergy Organisation (WAO) Centre of Excellence. The NACE builds critical national research infrastructure and collaboration that transforms consumer-centred allergy care.

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