



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Hon. Tony Stewart MP  
Minister for Small Business  
Minister for Science and Medical Research  
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)

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**Tuesday, October 28, 2008**

### **MINISTER DECLARES BRAIN TUMOUR FORUM “A MEETING OF GREAT MINDS”**

Assistant Health Minister (Cancer), Tony Stewart, today declared a forum on brain tumour “a meeting of great minds in the fight against this most challenging cancer”.

“I’m very pleased to open the Brain Tumour Support & Education Forum in Sydney today which brings together leading clinicians, patients and carers to discuss discoveries and new ways of helping those affected by brain tumour,” Mr Stewart said.

“The Rees Labor Government is committed to the fight against cancer and providing world-class health care to the people of NSW, and this forum is another example of that commitment.

“As the newly appointed Minister responsible for cancer, I’m proud the Labor Government established the Cancer Institute NSW in 2003,” Mr Stewart said.

“The Cancer Institute is spearheading many important initiatives in the Government’s battle against cancer, and I’m delighted the Institute is partnering with the NSW Oncology Group to hold this important brain tumour forum today.

“It’s forums such as this one that can shed new light on a disease that claims the lives of 320 people in NSW every year.”

Mr Stewart said, compared to the more common cancers, such as breast and bowel cancer, little was known about brain tumours.

“Medical science is improving our knowledge about brain cancers, but the causes and therefore measures to prevent and cure these diseases are largely unknown,” Mr Stewart said.

“Brain cancers are diagnosed in 500 people in NSW every year, and the prognosis is generally poor,” Mr Stewart said.

“Only 20 per cent of people diagnosed with brain cancer will survive beyond five years and more than half will die within twelve months.

“We also know that while men are one-and-a-half times more likely to be diagnosed, brain cancers can attack anyone.

“Brain cancer is a particularly challenging disease because not only is little known about it, but it also can dramatically change the behaviour of the patient, affecting the way they think and behave.

“This in turn impacts on carers, further increasing their burden of responsibility,” Mr Stewart said.

“I’m very grateful patients and carers have joined today’s event to share their personal experiences with the forum.

“I acknowledge this could be a painful experience, but the knowledge, views and suggestions from patients and carers are invaluable in helping improve the lives of others in the same situation,” Mr Stewart said.

“Their input can guide new programs to educate and support brain tumour patients and provide carers with more information about helping their loved ones,” Mr Stewart said.

“I also thank the clinicians for giving up their valuable time to share their knowledge as we unite to beat this disease.

“Surgeons like Dr Charlie Teo, who will speak at today’s forum, are pioneers of advanced neurosurgical techniques which are giving new hope to patients with a brain tumour.

“The Rees Labor Government is pleased to support today’s forum which I’m confident will lead to new initiatives to support those affected by brain tumour,” Mr Stewart said.

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