

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Monday, 13 June 2022

FIGHTMND: BACKING A GREAT CAUSE AND A GREAT VICTORIAN

Victorians today will pause to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Neale Daniher to raise awareness of Motor Neurone Disease (MND) and raise money for vital research to find a cure for the fatal disease.

Tens of thousands of football fans will be at the MCG today for the Big Freeze 8 to watch stars including Ash Barty, Hamish Blake and Eddie Betts take a slide and an icy dunk in the aid of a great cause.

Daniher, a former Essendon Football Club captain and coach of the Melbourne Football Club, was diagnosed with MND in 2013 and has since inspired the nation with his efforts to progress treatments and find a cure for the condition he calls "The Beast".

The Andrews Labor Government will donate \$250,000 to help FightMND reach its target of raising \$2 million by half time of today's Melbourne v Collingwood match. The donation builds on \$6 million previously donated by the Government to the Big Freeze and FightMND since 2014.

FightMND has invested more than \$55 million since its creation in 2014 in research including drug development and clinical trials, providing hope that a cure will be found for a disease that an estimated 2,100 Australians live with each day.

The Labor Government recognised Daniher's contribution to Victorian life with the declaration last year of "Daniher's Way" – the path that leads from William Barak Bridge's landing in Yarra Park to the MCG and which will be traversed today by fans of many colours united by the blue Big Freeze beanie.

The Government has invested \$1.3 billion in medical research since 2014, including up to \$400 million for the establishment of the Australian Institute for Infectious Disease.

To support the quest to find a cure for MND, buy a beanie or go to fightmnd.org.au.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"It's hard to think of a more inspiring person than Neale Daniher – the work he has done for others when faced with a devastating diagnosis is truly remarkable."

"It's great to be back at the MCG today and we're proud to support Neale's fight. Every day it brings us closer to finding a cure to this terrible disease."

Quotes attributable to Neale Daniher

"I thank the Victorian Government for their ongoing support and significant contribution to the fight against MND."

"These funds will be invested in urgent MND research to find better treatments and a cure for this Beast of a disease."