

# Statement

Hon Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier



Monday, 25 May 2026

## STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

To hear a locker room talk from Neale Daniher was something to treasure.

He had a way with words, even when MND started to take them from him.

“When all is said and done,” he'd say, “more is said than done.”

Well, not for Neale. He was a doer.

He was Essendon's youngest ever captain.

And as a coach, he'd take Melbourne to their first Grand Final in over a decade.

But it was after footy when he'd do his most important work.

When Neale shared his diagnosis with us in 2014, I don't think anyone would've blamed him for slowing down.

But that wasn't Neale's style.

Suddenly, anyone he'd ever crossed paths with was getting a tap on the shoulder to join his army.

For Neale, they'd go down the slide at the MCG, and get on the road for Daniher's Drive.

They'd fundraise and help him give others battling this brutal disease hope.

Because of his efforts, Australia is leading the fight against MND, with new clinical trials, drug development, research and early identification.

Every dollar raised, every blue beanie bought, helping to drive this disease to defeat.

Last year, Australia gave Neale one of its highest honours, naming him Australian of the Year.

It was a recognition of what he had done.

But more than that, it was a recognition of who he was.

Neale Daniher was a great Australian.

And with the support of his family, Victoria will proudly honour him with a State Memorial Service – a fitting tribute to an extraordinary life and an extraordinary contribution.

Jan, Lauren, Luke, Bec, Ben, and the wider Daniher clan, our hearts are breaking for you.

And to Neale, thank you.

Champion footballer.

Champion fighter.

Champion.