

**-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –**

Wally Lewis Supports Other Epilepsy Warriors in Bridge to Brisbane

Epilepsy Queensland is proud to announce Wally Lewis as their team ambassador in this year’s Sunday Mail Transurban Bridge to Brisbane on August 28.

‘The King’ of NRL has been open about his own personal journey with epilepsy and will be cheering on Team Epilepsy Queensland as they #BraveTheBridge for themselves, family members, friends and loved ones impacted by the condition.

“As Patron of Epilepsy Queensland, the most satisfying thing for me is speaking up for those who have epilepsy and helping others who are dealing with epilepsy or their family members,” explains Wally Lewis.

Epilepsy Queensland’s Chief Executive, Chris Dougherty, says:

“Despite the fact that 30,000 Queenslanders currently live with epilepsy, many of those individuals echo the sentiment that they feel isolated in their diagnosis. Having someone like Wally Lewis, who has gone through a similar experience, showing up to support them and their families will be instrumental in showing them that they aren’t alone.”

Brisbane’s biggest fun run, the Bridge to Brisbane, will see participants from all over South-East Queensland and beyond come together to raise money for the charity of their choice, including Epilepsy Queensland.

Star Raeli (9), a vivacious young girl, was suddenly diagnosed with epilepsy after experiencing a devastating 23 seizures in 24 hours. Now, just three months on from the moment that turned their lives upside down, Star will be taking part in the Bridge to Brisbane, alongside her family and friends as part of ‘Team Shooting Stars’, raising money for Epilepsy Queensland.

“This year we are participating in Bridge to Brisbane in recognition of Star, and all children living with epilepsy. Spreading awareness can help parents recognise potential signs of epilepsy and get on top of it so neither they, their children, family and friends, have to experience the heartache we have endured,” says Shana Raeli, Star’s loving mum.

‘Team Shooting Stars’, along with the rest of Team Epilepsy Queensland, will have the opportunity to chat with Wally Lewis at the Finishers Village after their race.

You can help Queenslanders with epilepsy and their families to access vital services, life-saving training and education sessions and find support when they need it.

There’s still time to donate to Team Epilepsy Queensland or register.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/B2BTeamEpilepsyQLD>

**MEDIA**

Interview and photo opportunities are available. Please contact Epilepsy Queensland on (07) 3435 5000 or 0479 178 281 to arrange or for more information.

Melissa Simpson – Manager, Partnerships and Engagement

msimpson@epilepsyqueensland.com.au

Shannon Bullen – Awareness and Engagement Specialist

sbullen@epilepsyqueensland.com.au

**ABOUT EPILEPSY QUEENSLAND**

For over 50 years, Epilepsy Queensland has been delivering help and hope to people impacted by epilepsy. We support individuals to live well by providing education and support for people with epilepsy, their family, and carers. We create a Queensland that is aware of epilepsy and its impacts on daily life, a Queensland that is seizure smart, who can recognise the signs of a seizure, and who respond to seizures with appropriate first aid.

**ABOUT EPILEPSY**

• Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders, with around 65 million people globally living with the condition.

• Alarmingly, neurological disorders are the world’s leading cause of disability and the world’s second leading cause of death.

• Epilepsy is a medical condition that affects the brain and causes seizures.

• 1 in 25 Australians will receive an epilepsy diagnosis.

• More than 28,740 Queenslanders live with an active diagnosis.

• 3,000 people will be diagnosed with epilepsy in QLD this year.

• On average 60 people per week in QLD are diagnosed with epilepsy.

• The age groups which are most often diagnosed with epilepsy are those aged 5 years and under and 65 years and over.

• However, ANYONE can develop epilepsy.

• There is hope for 70% of people who will achieve seizure control with medication, however 30% need hope through more research and/or cure.