

2 June 2009

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Lindsay Electorate: OZWAC

Mr BRADBURY» (Lindsay) (4:15 PM) —I rise to acknowledge the efforts of the dedicated group of local people who make up the Australian Women and Children's Research Foundation or OZWAC. OZWAC was founded in 1998 by Professor Brian Spurrett, Dr Chris Kohlenberg and local businessman Greg Allchin. The Penrith region has been fortunate to have attracted passionate advocates for women's and children's health. In the days when Western Sydney was a bridge too far for many clinical specialists of any discipline, pioneers like Professor Spurrett and Dr Kohlenberg recognised the massive need for their skills and experience in our region. Unfortunately both Professor Spurrett and Dr Kohlenberg have passed away since forming OZWAC but they have left a thriving legacy.

Now in its 11th year, OZWAC raises money to help drive important research into the health of women and children—research that is conducted entirely in Western Sydney. OZWAC fundraises to support research by the University of Sydney's Nepean Clinical School. The clinical school trains more than 200 medical students in partnership with the Nepean Hospital each year. It also provides clinicians and clinical students with the opportunity to undertake cutting edge research, which OZWAC has been able to financially support for the past decade. With the support of OZWAC the Penrith region has become a more attractive destination for innovative clinicians. I am also proud that the Rudd government is contributing \$17.2 million towards the construction of a new Nepean Clinical School facility opposite Nepean Hospital, providing a dedicated space for this clinical research to take place.

OZWAC has also helped to raise funds for the purchase of high tech medical equipment like 4D ultrasound machines and to help train doctors and nurses in specialist women's and children's healthcare techniques. Central to their fundraising program is the annual OZWAC ball, which this year celebrated its eighth anniversary. Along with my wife, I was honoured to be among the 260 people who attended this year's ball, which I am told raised more than \$30,000 and was supported by Panthers World of Entertainment, who generously donated the venue for the event. The people who attend OZWAC's fundraising events are not corporate high flyers; they are local business people and individuals who share OZWAC's passion for the health of our community. And without their support none of this research and investment in equipment would be possible.

I would like to acknowledge the work of chairperson Bruce Williams, secretary Dianne Courtman, treasurer Michelle Hampson, and fundraising coordinator Lea Hicks. They are supported by Professor Michael Peek and his team at the Nepean Clinical School and the other members of the OZWAC board, all of whom volunteer their time, including Professor Ralph Nanan; Professor George Condos; Professor Peter Deitz; Michelle Banning; members of the fundraising committee, Melanie Kennedy and Lois McGhee; and administration coordinator Maree Yabsley.

I thank the OZWAC team for their incredible work. They are making a difference to the lives of families in Western Sydney and I am certain they will continue to do so for decades to come.