Statement by PCD Australia - Remebering our President, Catherine Kruljac



It is with profound sadness that the Board of PCD Australia announces the passing of our much loved President, Catherine Kruljac.

Catherine was a remarkable advocate, leader and friend. She was deeply loved and treasured by the PCD community across Australia and held a very special place in the hearts of the international PCD community, as well as the many medical professionals and researchers she worked alongside.

In 2013, Catherine founded PCD Australia with a simple but powerful ambition: she didn't want children growing up with PCD to experience the same struggles she had endured throughout her own childhood, teenage years and adulthood living with the condition.

What began as a desire to make life better for the next generation grew into something extraordinary.

Catherine built a community, gave a voice to people living with this rare condition and worked tirelessly to improve awareness, understanding, diagnosis, treatment and support. She advocated passionately with government, the medical profession and the broader community to ensure that the needs and experiences of people living with PCD were heard.

For Catherine, PCD Australia was always about people. It was about making sure no one had to navigate a PCD diagnosis or the challenges of living with the condition alone.

That commitment was evident in the countless personal connections she made. She would answer Facebook messages at all hours of the night and morning as newly diagnosed parents found their way to the PCD Australia family support group. She offered reassurance, understanding and a safe place for families to process a diagnosis, ask questions and connect with others who truly understood what they were going through.

For so many, Catherine was often the first person who made them feel they were not alone. Her influence and contribution extended well beyond Australia. Catherine was a respected and deeply valued member of the international PCD community. She built meaningful relationships across the world, connecting with medical professionals, researchers and advocates, and helping strengthen the global community working to improve outcomes for people living with PCD.

Those who had the privilege of knowing Catherine will remember her for so much more than her advocacy and leadership. They will remember her generosity, determination, warmth and extraordinary care for others. She gave so much of herself to this community, often quietly and behind the scenes, because she genuinely wanted life to be better for others living with PCD.

Catherine leaves behind an extraordinary legacy. The community she created, the connections she fostered and the lives she touched will continue to shape PCD Australia and the broader PCD community for generations to come.

On behalf of the Board of PCD Australia, we extend our deepest condolences to Catherine's family, friends and everyone who knew and loved her. Our thoughts are with them at this incredibly difficult time.

Catherine's vision was that no one living with PCD should feel alone. Through her life's work, she made that possible for so many.

She was one of a kind. She will be profoundly missed and forever treasured.

The Board of PCD Australia

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About PCD Australia

PCD Australia is a patient-led organisation supporting people living with Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia (PCD), their families and the broader community. The organisation works to provide connection, support, advocacy and education, while raising awareness and contributing to improved understanding and outcomes for people living with PCD.

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