



a charity dedicated to improving lives affected by eosinophilic disorders

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- MEDIA RELEASE -

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## Feeding tubes sustain life but come with challenges

During Feeding Tube Awareness Week (FTAW), 2-8 February, ausEE Inc. is putting the spotlight on tube feeding and the day-to-day impact on individuals, carers and families.

There are many reasons why children or adults may require tube feeding, which is a way food in liquid form or formula can get into your body if you are unable to eat or unable to eat enough to meet nutritional needs. The two most common feeding tubes are a nasogastric tube (NG), which is a tube that is put up the nose and down into the stomach and is mostly used for short term tube feeding and a gastrostomy, often called a PEG, (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy) is placed in the stomach during a procedure and is used for medium-long term tube feeding.

Those living with a feeding tube express gratitude for how it sustains their life. However, living with a tube does come with challenges. Individuals report experiencing social stigma, associated anxiety and a general lack of support, understanding and awareness in the community. Some of the issues faced are limited access to education and training on tube feeding for family members, childcare and schools, portability of feeds, access to medical services in regional and rural areas and lack of tube weaning programs. There are also inequities in financial assistance being provided for tube feeding supplies and respite for carers.

ausEE is the National patient advocacy organisation for eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders, just one condition that may require a patient to have a feeding tube. Sarah Gray, ausEE president says, 'Feeding Tube Awareness Week is an important opportunity to increase awareness and understanding to the greater community about tube feeding and raise some of the challenges faced.'

'This week is about bringing everyone in Australia together who has a feeding tube, whatever the reason may be.'

For families living with feeding tubes they can find out about support groups and links to practical resources on the FTAW website: [www.feedingtubeaware.com.au](http://www.feedingtubeaware.com.au)

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