



a charity dedicated to improving lives affected by eosinophilic disorders

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- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

Eddie Woo announced ausEE charity ambassador

Eddie Woo has fast become an Australian household name and National charity ausEE Inc. is excited to announce him as their Charity Ambassador, leading into their National EOS Awareness Week (5-11 August 2018).

2018 Australia's Local Hero, mathematics teacher for the NSW Department of Education and TV Host of Teenage Boss, Eddie Woo has been inspiring students across the globe since 2012 through his YouTube channel, Wootube, which has now reached nearly eighteen million views. Eddie has joined ausEE Inc., as their Charity Ambassador to help raise awareness for eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders (EGID), a cause close to his heart. Eddie is a proud father with three children who all live with some form of allergic disease. This includes asthma, eczema and multiple immediate food allergies. One of them has an EGID, namely, eosinophilic oesophagitis (EoE).

EoE is a rare allergic disease caused by eosinophils, a type of white blood cell, being found in above-normal amounts in the oesophagus which can cause inflammation and tissue damage. This has caused Eddie's child to live with symptoms such as difficulty swallowing, vomiting, stomach pain and 'failure to thrive'. Eddie says, "The difficulties are every day. Eating itself has become a really difficult experience, because eating was associated with an incredible amount of discomfort and pain just to squeeze food and drink down. In addition, there is a social aspect to food that is very difficult for others to understand. Since relationships are often formed through mealtimes, our children have had to struggle with having a complex and cautious relationship to even the simplest social gatherings."

It is estimated that 1 in 2,000 Australians are living with EoE. ausEE Inc. founder, Sarah Gray, says "National EOS Awareness Week is an opportunity to reach out to more people living with an EGID and raise awareness to the community". "It's important for people living with an EGID to have support networks in place because these disorders are complicated to treat, and you can feel very isolated." ausEE Inc. provides this support and additionally is a source of valuable information for people living with the disorders.

Patients often have a long road to a diagnosis, with a diagnosis only being made after an endoscopy and biopsy. After diagnosis, a lengthy process follows working with the medical team to put together an individualised treatment plan. There is no cure and one of the common treatment options is an elimination diet, tailored to the individual and can mean removing up to the Top 8 common allergenic foods implicated in EoE (which are milk, eggs, wheat, fish, peanuts, tree nuts, soy or shellfish). Some individuals may be able to identify specific food(s) or airborne allergens that trigger symptoms, but others cannot. Currently the only way to effectively monitor the disease is to have a repeat endoscopy and biopsies, and for some, this may be required several times a year.

During National EOS Awareness Week, ausEE Inc. hosts their major fundraising campaign, the Top 8 Challenge to raise much needed funds for medical research. The Top 8 Challenge is held each year on 8/8 and is a way to gain some understanding of what it may be like living with an EGID. To take the challenge you can choose how many of the top allergenic foods you remove from your diet on Wednesday 8 August. Sarah says, "You might choose to go only without milk or no wheat and egg or eliminate as many of the top 8 foods you can, up to removing all top 8 foods."

ausEE Inc. has been campaigning and raising funds for research since it was founded and to date has funded nearly \$75,000 in medical research grants. To take the challenge please visit their website at www.top8challenge.com.

For more information about eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders and ausEE Inc.'s support networks please visit: www.ausee.org

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