

ACCESS TO DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT FOR PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA WITH TICK-BORNE DISEASES

23rd November 2024

Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Tick-Borne Diseases in Australia

From:

To whom it may concern,

In 2008, after years of debilitating illness, I was diagnosed with *Borrelia burgdorferi*, *Mycoplasma*, and Anaplasmosis through blood tests sent to Germany. Unfortunately, due to the lack of adequate diagnostic tools and treatments in Australia, I have remained unwell.

I was a dedicated primary school teacher for 25 years, but my health forced me into early retirement. I now live with persistent symptoms, including widespread body pain, extreme fatigue (at one point requiring up to 20 hours of sleep per day), brain fog, nausea, depression, and anxiety. These symptoms have drastically reduced my ability to live a normal life.

Socialising has become a significant challenge, as even small outings can leave me bedridden for days afterward. My once vibrant life, filled with close friends, a job I was passionate about, and hobbies like playing netball, has been taken from me.

At the time of my diagnosis, I had never traveled overseas, but I had been bitten by multiple ticks during a particularly wet summer in Australia. I believe these bites triggered my illness, yet I have found little acknowledgment or support for tick-borne diseases in this country.

I urge you to investigate Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses in Australia. Too many lives are being upended by these debilitating conditions, and the lack of recognition and treatment options is leaving countless people to suffer in silence.

Please help.

Sincerely,