

**For immediate release  
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**Blackmores' \$2 million donation – growing together to see the future**

This week, Ita Buttrose, media personality and patron of the MD Foundation presented Blackmores with a commemorative Broad-leafed Paperbark tree (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) today in a symbolic gesture of appreciation of the \$2 million contributed to the Foundation through sales of Blackmores' eye health products.

At an official ceremony held at Blackmores' Warriewood Campus, the MD Foundation was presented with a plaque to celebrate this significant milestone.

Since 2002, Blackmores has donated a percentage of sales of their eye health products, Lutein-Vision®, Macu-Vision® and Lutein-Vision Advanced™, to support MD Foundation's education, awareness and research programs across Australia. MD is the leading cause of blindness and severe vision loss in this country.

Blackmores' Chairman, Marcus Blackmore AM, said "Blackmores is proud to have directly contributed to the MD Foundation's achievements in supporting the one in seven Australians over 50 affected by MD<sup>1</sup>".

The MD Foundation Australia is a charity and the only organisation solely committed to reducing incidence and impact of MD in Australia.

Chief Executive Officer of the MD Foundation, Julie Heraghty says, "The partnership with Blackmores is extremely valuable for the Foundation. This is one of the best examples of how a partnership between a charity and a business can work. Blackmores and the MD Foundation are working together towards a common goal; the improvement of eye health for all Australians. The Foundation sincerely thanks Blackmores for their dedication."

With MD Awareness Week from 24 – 30 May, Julie says "one of the most important things you can do when it comes to MD, is to have your eyes tested and make sure the macula is checked."

"While it's encouraging to know that many Australians are heeding the Foundation's call to have their eyes checked, it appears many are unaware of the vital role nutrition and diet can play in promoting good eye health," says Julie.

"Eating a healthy diet that includes the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin as well as omega-3s, controlling weight, exercising regularly and not smoking will all help reduce the risk of developing MD. In consultation with a doctor, consider an appropriate eye-health supplement," said Julie.

Marcus Blackmore is positive about the future of the relationship with the MD Foundation. "We are committed to assisting the Foundation in educating Australians about MD and hope that our contribution to it from the sales of Blackmores will continue to grow."

"Early detection is crucial. Changes in vision should not just be seen as a part of getting older. If you do notice a change in your vision, get your eyes checked immediately," says Julie.

**MD Awareness Week is next week from 24 – 30 May 2009**

**- ENDS -**

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*Always read the label. Use only as directed. See your healthcare professional if symptoms persist.*

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell P, Taylor HR, Keeffe JE, Vu H, Wang JJ, Rochtchina E, Pezzullo L M, 'Vision loss in Australia' Medical Journal of Australia 2005; 12: