

MEDIA RELEASE

## THERAPEUTIC DOSE OF THE CLASSICS

**Friday 19 June, 11am | Mount Pritchard Community Club Auditorium**

Musicians from the Sydney Symphony will pay a special visit to the children and parents of the Autism Advisory Support Group in Mt Pritchard on Friday 19 June at the Mount Pritchard Community Club.

The performance is part of the award-winning 'Sydney Symphony & MBF music4health' program that sees musicians from the Orchestra perform in hospitals, aged care facilities and other venues where the therapeutic benefits of live classical music can be of benefit.



*"Sydney Symphony & MBF music4health is undoubtedly the cornerstone of our community work,"* says Sydney Symphony Managing Director, Rory Jeffes. *"The feedback we receive on the powerful effect that music has on people's lives proves to us what an important program this is."*

The Autism Advisory and Support Service (AASS) was founded in 2007 by Bonnyrigg Heights resident Grace Fava, herself a mother of two sons both with autism, to fill what she saw as a void in the available support services and information resources for parents with autistic children in the area. AASS now provides networks for over 500 families in the region, ensuring they have all the information and support necessary to confidently raise autistic children.

*"The use of musical therapy in treating autistic children is still in its early stages so to have musicians from the Sydney Symphony performing for the children is wonderful,"* says Fava. *"I've seen in my own sons that music has an amazing calming effect. It's as though they already have an unexplainable connection with music, as though it's already engrained in them and they instinctively understand it."*

The Sydney Symphony & MBF partnership began in 2005 and is the first instance in Australia of a large private health insurer and an established musical institution partnering to promote the positive health-related links between music and wellbeing. At visits such as this with children present, the young attendees are provided percussion instruments and encouraged to play along as part of a "Toy Symphony", adding an interactive and educational element to the experience.

*"This program really makes us aware of how a small amount of live classical music can have a huge effect on the young children present,"* says Sydney Symphony violinist Stan Kornel, who frequently conducts the performances. *"It's such a source of joy and encouragement to see their faces light up."*

Dr Christine Bennett, Chief Medical Officer at Bupa Australia\* says the Program highlights the natural alignment between beautiful music and improved health and wellness.

*"Music has the ability to relax the children, improving their responses to treatment and therapy,"* Dr Bennett said. *"In addition to experiencing the therapeutic power of music, the concerts are great fun and a welcome break for the children, as well their parents and carers."*

The performance will take place at 11am in the auditorium of the Mount Pritchard Community Club.

**## ENDS ##**

**Note: Photography is welcome at this event. Contact:**

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**Note to Editors:**

Date: Friday 19 June 2009  
Time: 11am  
Venue: Mount Pritchard Community Club Auditorium  
476 Cabramatta Rd  
Mount Pritchard NSW 2170

**2009 music4health dates:**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Fri 27 March</b>     | St Vincent's Hospital Darlinghurst   |
| <b>Thurs 7 May</b>      | The Children's Hospital Randwick   |
| <b>Thurs 21 May</b>     | Bupa Mosman  |
| <b>Fri 19 June</b>      | Autism Advisory & Support Service, Mount Pritchard Community Club Auditorium |
| <b>Sat 27 June</b>      | Wagga Wagga Base Hospital  |
| <b>Fri 14 August</b>    | The Children's Hospital at Westmead  |
| <b>Fri 25 September</b> | Bupa Dural   |
| <b>Fri 4 December</b>   | The Children's Hospital at Westmead  |
| <b>Fri 11 December</b>  | Powerhouse Museum  |

\* Bupa Australia cares for its customers under the brands MBF, HBA, Mutual Community and ClearView.

**About MBF**

MBF has been looking after Australians for more than 60 years.

As a leading private health insurer, MBF's primary aim is to help all Australians live longer, healthier and happier lives.

MBF proudly covers around 1.7 million Australians, giving them the confidence to better manage their health and care needs. We have a broad range of quality health insurance products to support people through all of life's different stages, and we have an extensive member centre network across the country. Recently, we were independently assessed by CANNEX and given a five star rating as one of Australia's best value health insurers.

In addition to our core private health insurance business, the MBF group of companies offers life and travel insurance, as well as financial planning, superannuation and managed investment products through ClearView Financial Solutions, ClearView Life Nominees and MBF Life.