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#### MEDIA RELEASE

## Estimated 3 million Australians experiencing high levels of loneliness

“It’s not helpful to label some people as lonely and others as not lonely” said researcher Eleisha Lauria. If we do, then we continue the stigma that surrounds this debilitating health issue. Most people experience loneliness at some stage in their lives, it’s just that for some right now the levels of this loneliness are higher.

In Australia’s first representative survey using a loneliness scale a new report from charity Friends for Good has found that an estimated 3 million Australian’s are currently experiencing high levels of loneliness.

“This is a frightening statistic” said Friends for Good Co-Founder, Laura Rouhan. Friends for Good found that loneliness does not discriminate, it affects people from all walks of life and age groups.”

Overseas empirical research demonstrates that chronic loneliness is related to heart disease, depression, anxiety and even reduced life span. Patricia said “Friends for Good have heard first hand from callers to our telephone support service, Friend Line, that loneliness is real and impacts their health and wellbeing everyday”. Research tells us that loneliness is a complex problem and requires a multi-faceted approach.

The conference then will bring together practitioners, service providers, academics and government staffers to collaborate about this issue. Patricia says: “we aim to learn from one another, formulate recommendations and make plans for the future to bring about real change”.

Friends For Good is a not-for-profit organisation aiming to free people from loneliness.

### For more information

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