

# DO YOU LEAK WHEN YOU LAUGH?

Call the National Continence Helpline  
**1800 33 00 66**



## MEDIA RELEASE

6 May 2018

# Does incontinence cause geliophobia?

## Laugh Without Leaking on World Laughter Day - 6 May

To celebrate the internationally recognised World Laughter Day (6 May), the Continence Foundation of Australia's *Laugh Without Leaking* campaign has revealed the good news that incontinence, suffered by more than 5 million Aussies, need not cause geliophobia.

Geliophobia is a genuine fear of laughter says awarding-winning comedian and Continence Foundation Ambassador, Bev Killick who has lived with incontinence most of her life.

"We all know laughter is the best medicine. Many people who have a problem with leaking, may also have a fear of laughing," says Bev.

"I often have people come up to me after a show and say 'I laughed so hard, I wet my pants'. As a comedian, that's a great compliment, but now I feel I also have the responsibility to tell others that you can still have a good laugh without leaking," says Bev.

The Continence Foundation of Australia believes humour is a great way to overcome the stigma of incontinence and get people talking about their bladder, bowel and pelvic floor problems. That is why they have partnered with the Melbourne International Comedy Festival Roadshow as it journeys across Australia for the next three months, spreading the good news that the majority of incontinence cases can be helped or even cured.

"One in four Australians have an incontinence issue," says Continence Foundation CEO Rowan Cockerell. "For many, incontinence is not a laughing matter. It is an embarrassing and frequently painful problem that can lead to anxiety, depression and other serious health issues. That is why it is important to urge people to seek help and take that first step toward a happier, healthier future."

World Laughter Day was created in 1998 by Indian doctor, Madan Kataria in Mumbai, as a positive influence on health and wellbeing. It is now celebrated in 105 countries worldwide.

To get help for bladder, bowel and pelvic floor health problems:

- Call the free **National Continence Helpline 1800 33 00 66**
- Get information and helpful resources from **continece.org.au**
- Talk to your doctor or a continence specialist.

For further information: [laughwithoutleaking.com.au](http://laughwithoutleaking.com.au) and <https://www.comedyfestival.com.au/roadshow>

With special thanks to:



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### **Available for media interviews:**

Bev Killick, Rowan Cockerell, Beth Wilson Continenence Foundation Patron/comic/lawyer, continence health experts and people living with incontinence.

### **Continenence fast facts**

- About 5 million Australians – 1 in 4 people aged 15 years or over – are incontinent.
- By 2030, the prevalence is estimated to increase to 6.5 million Australians.
- The majority of people affected by incontinence can be better treated, managed or cured.
- 70% of incontinent people do not seek help.
- 80% of people who report they are living with incontinence are women.
- Half of those women are aged under 50 years.
- 1 in 3 women who have ever had a baby wet themselves.
- 1 in 5 leak when they laugh.
- 25% of men say they are, or were, incontinent.
- Incontinence impacts self-esteem, motivation, dignity and independence.
- In 2010, the total economic cost of incontinence was estimated to be \$66.7 billion and rising.

### **About Bev Killick**

Bev Killick is a Melbourne-based actress, comedian, writer, singer and mother-of-two, who has lived with incontinence since she “was naughty after giving birth and didn’t do my pelvic floor exercises”. She is an Ambassador for the *Continenence Foundation of Australia* and the face of the *Laugh Without Leaking* awareness campaign. Bev features in the new Australian comedy film *That’s Not My Dog!* alongside Shane Jacobson, Paul Hogan and a host of other Aussie stars. Her other acting credits include *Kath & Kim*, *Jack Irish*, *Fat Pizza*, *WAG Nation*, *MDA* and *Sunshine*. Bev also appeared in the recently released children’s adventure film *The Comet Kids*. Bev currently combines her *Laugh Without Leaking* ambassador duties for the Continenence Foundation of Australia with stand-up comedy on the high seas for P&O Cruises as well as a performer of the 2018 Melbourne International Comedy Festival Roadshow.

### **About Rowan Cockerell RN, M Bus, GAICD**

Rowan Cockerell has worked in healthcare and community services, aged care and service development projects for 38 years. Over this time, she has held executive positions across the private, not-for-profit and public sector with a particular interest in continence treatment and management. As Chief Executive Officer of the Continenence Foundation of Australia, Rowan is an advocate for the interests of Australians affected by, or at risk of, bladder and bowel control problems and pelvic floor dysfunction.

### **About the Continenence Foundation of Australia**

The Continenence Foundation of Australia is a not-for-profit health organisation and the national peak body for incontinence awareness, management, education and advocacy. The Foundation is funded by the Australian Government under the National Continenence Program and operates the free National Continenence Helpline 1800 33 00 66.

[continence.org.au](http://continence.org.au)