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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Movember encourages men to shape their own experience by making a commitment to their health**

The Movember Foundation is fighting for men to live happier, healthier and longer lives by shaping the landscape for male specific diseases through research and survivorship programmes. Each year in November, Movember is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on millions of men’s faces around the world and in South Africa – raising funds and awareness for men’s health issues, specifically prostate and testicular cancer as well as men’s mental health and physical inactivity.

Globally there is still a stigma around diseases that affect men and often men don’t talk about issues they are experiencing and concerns they may have, which impacts on early detection and essentially life expectancy. The Movember Foundation aims to create a world where men don’t need to suffer or succumb to diseases which are preventable or manageable if they are detected early enough.

“The theme for this year’s Movember campaign is *Shaped by Experience* with the underlying message that if you choose to live well and follow a healthy lifestyle, and pay attention to your health and the warning signs, you can help shape your future,” says Garron Gsell, CEO and founder of the Men’s Foundation.

Movember encourages men to become Mo Bros (as supporters of the campaign are affectionately known) by signing up on [www.movember.com](http://www.movember.com). The rules require each Mo Bro to start 1 Movember clean shaven and to grow and groom a moustache for the entire month, effectively becoming a walking, talking billboard for the 30 days of Movember. Through this action of growing a mo, and encouraging others to do the same, Mo Bros prompt private and public conversation around the often ignored issues of men’s health.

With the support of the women in their lives or Mo Sistas, who are also asked to sign up on [movember.com](http://www.movember.com), Movember is driving the message that early detection is key: annual health checks are vital, along with a monthly testicular self-examination which can help make you aware of your body and able to note any changes.

This year the Movember Foundation has also added an additional aspect to the month-long campaign, the option to sign up to MOVE. When signing up on the Movember website, Mo Bros and Mo Sistas can choose to make a commitment to MOVE for the 30 days of Movember. Studies have proven that incorporating more exercise into your daily routine has many benefits and often makes you feel better, more energised and could possibly add years to your life. This commitment to MOVE can include anything from a daily brisk walk or taking the stairs instead of the lift, to surfing, cycling, swimming or anything that gets the heart rate up.

“By adding even the smallest amount of physical activity to your day, you are investing in your health and improving your chances of living a happier, healthier and longer life,” says Gsell. “The Movember Foundation believe that growing old is mandatory and staying young is optional, and we want to encourage men to get more active for the sake of their wellbeing.”

In addition to awareness and education generated from the Movember campaign, the funds raised from Mo Bros’ & Mo Sistas’ efforts fund survivorship and research programmes. These programmes aim to provide men with the best choices and treatment options available. Globally the Movember Foundation has brought some of the brightest medical minds – including urologists, oncologists, sexologists and general health practitioners – together to formulate a number of programmes which will change the male health sphere.

In South Africa, Movember is administered through the Men’s Foundation which holds the licence agreement for the campaign in the country. The Foundation has partnered with its health partners the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA), the Prostate Cancer Foundation and the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) to formulate local programmes to help men in the country. These programmes are currently in their planning and pilot phases and aim to give men the support they need and to take the burden of care off of the governmental health system.

“We know mental health is an integral part of health – indeed there is no health without mental health. By partnering with SADAG this year, we are able to extend our reach to male mental health issues which has been a focus for our global territories for a number of years,” adds Gsell. “Globally suicide is the biggest killer of men aged 20 to 39, with three quarter of all suicides being men. We hope to challenge the idea that a ‘strong’ man is the only way to be ‘manly’ and challenge the notion that men talking and showing emotion is ‘weak’.”

To help spread awareness and *Change the Face of Men’s Health*, sign up to grow or MOVE (or both) as an individual, create/join a team, or get your company to participate in a network challenge – and don’t forget to start 1 Movember clean shaven and grow and groom your mo for the month of November.

Get checked, know your numbers, sign up, grow, give, move – join us! Together we can *Change the Face of Men’s Health.*

For more information or to sign up as a Mo Bro or Mo Sista visit [www.movember.com](http://www.movember.com) or download the Movember app on your mobile device. Follow Movember on social media: @MovemberRSA on Twitter or facebook/MovemberSouthAfrica.

**ENDS**

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**ABOUT MOVEMBER**

[**Movember**](http://za.movember.com/) is an annual campaign in 21 countries around the globe to “Change The Face of Men’s Health” that started in Australia in 2003. With the support of their Mo Sistas, Mo Bros start the month with a clean-shaven face and for the rest of November (Movember), groom, and grow their way into the annals of fine moustachery to become walking, talking billboards raising awareness and funds for the often ignored issue of men’s health. Mo Bros seek out sponsorship for their Mo-growing efforts and at the end of the month, celebrate by hosting their own Movember party or attending one of Movember’s Gala Partés. Individuals, groups and corporates are encouraged to register on [www.movember.com](http://www.movember.com) from 15 September 2016 and start clean shaven on 1 Movember. Join in the fun or follow the campaign on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/MovemberSouthAfrica) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/MovemberRSA).

**Social media channels:**

#tag: #MovemberRSA

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MovemberSouthAfrica>

Twitter: @MovemberRSA

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