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## **National charity wins Compassionate Employer Award**

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Tomorrow, Friday 13 March, Muscular Dystrophy Australia (MDA) will be receiving the '2015 Compassionate Employer Recognition Award' at Parliament House, Melbourne, presented by Compassionate Friends Victoria Inc. to acknowledge its exceptional care provided to employees in difficult personal times.

The award aims to demonstrate best workplace practices in dealing with bereavement, to encourage the adoption of these practices in other workplaces and educate business and community about the impacts of the death of a loved one.

This award specifically pertains to the compassion shown to MDA's Client Services Manager, Maria Kouppas, around the time of her mother's passing in 2013.

"My mother passed away in 2013 and I am fortunate to work for MDA who constantly faces life challenges every day. Once the organisation knew my mother didn't have long to go I was able to come and go as I pleased so I could spend time with my mother in her last moments," said Mrs Kouppas.

"After her passing it was not a question of when you will be back to work but take the time you need to heal. Flowers were sent to the house along with a special morning tea to welcome me back on deck."

Mrs Kouppas will be attending the awards ceremony with MDA's Executive Director, Boris M Struk at Parliament House, Melbourne.

"It is an absolute honour for MDA to receive this award; the recognition is very much appreciated. I do feel every employer should provide as much support and lenience as possible to their employees in difficult times such as this," said MDA Executive Director, Boris M Struk.

"It was recently the anniversary of my mother's death and again I was presented with flowers in fond memory of my mother. The support has been never ending with not only myself but also with the families associated with MDA. Death is always hard but the healing process was made easier through the wide arms of support provided to me by MDA," said Mrs Kouppas.

**To arrange an interview with Muscular Dystrophy Australia Executive Director, Boris M Struk, please contact:**

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