



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**EMBARGOED until March 8, 2012**

**ANGELS APPLAUDED ON WORLD KIDNEY DAY**

Rebecca Baker has been honoured as a recipient of Kidney Health Australia's Operation Angel Awards Program, announced today to mark World Kidney Day, 2012.

Ms Anne Wilson, CEO of Kidney Health Australia said: "Operation Angel is a National Awards Program recognising the unsung heroes of the kidney sector – the carers, the patients, doctors and nurses who work tirelessly to support those with kidney disease and to increase awareness of the need to reduce the burden of kidney disease."

One in 9 Australians over the age of 25 or 1.7 million Australians has chronic kidney disease. More than 50 Australians die each day with kidney-related disease. This is why the work carried out by hundreds of people daily in hospitals and kidney clinics across the country is so important.

According to the latest figures from the Australia and New Zealand Dialysis and Transplant Registry, there are currently 10,603 Australians on dialysis who benefit from the care and support our unsung heroes so willingly provide.

Rebecca Baker was born with a kidney-related disease. The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne was home for the first five years of her life and since birth, she has had 39 kidney-related operations.

Inspired to represent the many other kidney patients coping with more complex medical conditions, at the age of 21, she walked 3,456 kilometres from Mount Gambier to Darwin, wearing out five pairs of shoes in the process to raise awareness and funds for Kidney Health Australia.

The people she met along the way were inspired by her courage, endurance and determination on her massive adventure. Many thought she was crazy. But upon arrival in Darwin, she was emotionally overwhelmed in seeing that the patients from the Renal Unit Darwin Hospital came to walk alongside her. Among them were three children kidney patients who made Rebecca realise the significance of her walk.

Kidney Health Australia is proud to honour Rebecca for her outstanding service in spreading awareness of kidney disease.

For more information on kidneys visit: [www.kidney.org.au](http://www.kidney.org.au).

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