KIDNEY HEALTH AUSTRALIA®

MEDIA RELEASE

May 9, 2011

Kidney Health Australia welcomes dialysis funding

Kidney Health Australia CEO Anne Wilson says some of Australia's most remote regions will have better access to renal dialysis following an announcement to expand services in Western Australia, made earlier today by the Federal Government.

Ms Wilson has warmly welcomed the $48 million dollar commitment which the Federal Government has said is part of its 2011/12 budget health infrastructure projects.

"The creation and expansion of new services including 22 new renal dialysis chairs, alongside a supporting commitment to fund 46 patient accommodation units, will improve the lives of many with end stage kidney disease in areas of the Kimberley, Goldfields, Pilbara and Bunbury," she said.

"Importantly, indigenous Australians, who have a higher risk of developing kidney disease, will benefit from these new dialysis chairs and services. Other Australians who are at increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease are Australians over 50; diabetes sufferers; smokers; people with high blood pressure and people of Torres Strait Islander descent."

Ms Wilson said the Federal Government had shown it understood the hardship involved in accessing life-saving dialysis for people in remote communities. She said it would mean many of them could continue to live in their communities, whereas previously they might have had to face not only the disease, but moving and living unsupported in a major centre, such as Perth.

Ms Wilson said specifically the announcement included:

- 45.8 million dollars for the expansion of renal dialysis services at outreach centres, including: 17 additional renal dialysis chairs across four sites. These would be at Kimberley (Fitzroy Crossing) with four chairs; Pilbara (Roebourne) four chairs; Goldfields (Kalgoorlie) an increase from seven to 12 chairs; Goldfields (Laverton/Leonora) up to four chairs. As well as new clinical treatment areas in Broome, Port Hedland; Kalgoorlie and Geraldton to support regional renal specialist teams and 46 patient accommodation units across seven locations. These were Broome; Derby; Kununurra and Fitzroy Crossing (Kimberley), Roebourne, Kalgoorlie and Carnarvon (Midwest).

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- $2.55 million for Renal Dialysis Unit expansion, Bunbury. Funding is for the expansion of the existing renal dialysis unit at St John of God Hospital, Bunbury, including: five new renal dialysis chairs to increase the renal dialysis services to 12 chairs and supporting infrastructure such as additional storage, consult/treatment suites, lift reverse osmosis unit and car parking.

Ms Wilson said Kidney Health Australia looked forward to working with the Federal and WA Governments to improve health outcomes for those with chronic and end stage kidney disease in Australia.

Enquiries

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