

MEDIA RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$3.7 million towards fighting kidney disease

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, announces funding during Kidney Health Week

Kidney Health Australia has today welcomed the announcement by Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, to invest \$3.7 million in support of kidney disease – the silent killer affecting more than 1.7 million Australians.

“This week is Kidney Health Week, and so the timing is perfect as we raise awareness of this insidious disease”, said Chris Forbes, CEO of Kidney Health Australia.

Kidney Health Australia and the Big Red Kidney Bus caught up with Minister Hunt in his electorate to give him a guided tour of the mobile dialysis unit.

“Minister Hunt recognises both the burden experienced by those with chronic kidney disease and the imperative to raise awareness and promote early detection of this insidious disease”.

This investment will support kidney health priorities outlined in the National Strategic Action Plan developed by Kidney Health Australia with support from the Federal Government.

The National Strategic Action Plan for Kidney Disease is a culmination of wide engagement across the kidney community. Forbes states, **“The consultation included a survey sent to the community including those people with kidney disease and their carers, healthcare providers, government, peak and professional bodies and other chronic disease organisations. More than 2,500 responses were received with 1,800 responses in the first 48 hours alone, reflecting tremendous engagement and the desire for their voice to be heard”.**

The plan focusses on prevention, early detection, education, optimal care and support, research and data.

“The kidney health community looks forward to working with the Government to deliver this plan, which will save lives and ease the burden of the disease”, says Forbes.

Kidney Health Australia welcomes the Government’s funding commitment of \$1.25 million to support a national online digital hub for kidney patients.

Minister Hunt also announced \$200,000 for Dialysis Australia in support of home dialysis.

A further \$2.25 million has been allocated for other activities aligned with actions in the National Strategic Action Plan for Kidney Disease.

Kidney Health Week runs until 14 April.

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About Kidney Health Week: 8 – 14 April, 2019

Kidney Health Week is Kidney Health Australia's annual national awareness campaign to raise awareness of kidney disease, and highlight the need for early detection to reach the 5 million adult Australians at risk of developing kidney disease, and the further 1.5 million who are unaware they are living with early signs.

About Kidney Health Australia

Kidney Health Australia is a not-for-profit and the peak body for kidney health in Australia with a vision 'to save and improve the lives of people living in Australia affected by kidney disease'.

Kidney Health Facts

- Kidney-related disease kills more people than breast cancer, prostate cancer and road accidents combined
- Figures released by the Bureau of Statistics late last year revealed that 65 people are dying with kidney-related disease every day
- Kidney disease sufferers can lose 90% of kidney function without experiencing any symptoms
- One in three people living in Australia is at risk of developing chronic kidney disease
- Of the staggering 1.7 million people affected by kidney disease, 1.5 million are not aware they have it
- Tragically, one in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have indicators of chronic kidney disease and are four times more likely to die from it than the non-Indigenous population
- Kidney-related disease is estimated to cost the Australian economy \$4.1 billion a year

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