

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Big Red Kidney Bus Arrives in Port Macquarie

The Big Red Kidney Bus, a mobile dialysis unit which allows people living with kidney disease to go on holiday, has arrived in Port Macquarie.

The NSW Big Red Kidney Bus will be located at the NRMA Port Macquarie Breakwall Holiday Park until 28 July 2018, offering families and individuals from around Australia the opportunity to meet up with the bus, continuing their dialysis treatment at no cost, whilst on holiday.

To celebrate the Big Red Kidney Bus arriving in Port Macquarie, a new destination for the NSW Bus, a community morning tea will be held on Friday 6 July 2018 from 11:00am to 12:00pm on location at the NRMA Port Macquarie Breakwall Holiday Park.

Kidney Health Australia and Royal North Shore Hospital operate the Bus in partnership, providing up to 1,500 dialysis treatments a year under the expert care of the Royal North Shore Hospital dialysis team.

Looking forward to using the Big Red Kidney Bus for the first time is home dialysis patient, Bruce Rickard. Bruce booked a dialysis chair on the Bus earlier this year, and was surprised at how easy it was to secure a seat. "As long as you're on email or phone, you can book. It's easy," Bruce said.

Bruce will be spending two weeks in the Port Macquarie area, and plans to visit the nearby beaches. The Big Red Kidney Bus offers patients like Bruce a much needed break from the restrictions of home dialysis. "It gives you a bit of respite from having to do your normal routine all the time. You just need some time to get away. This is my time," said Bruce.

Kidney Health Australia's Interim Chief Executive Officer, Dr Lisa Murphy, said she is thrilled the award-winning Big Red Kidney Bus program is now in NSW after originally starting in Victoria in 2014.

It can be extremely difficult for those with end-stage kidney disease to take a holiday, said Dr Murphy. "On average, dialysis patients need to have treatment for up to five hours at a time, three days a week, and holiday dialysis chair availability is very limited around Australia."

The Big Red Kidney Buses are open to all Australians on hospital, satellite or home haemodialysis. The Bus is also available for Port Macquarie locals who might want to try out the service, with a view to including it in their future travel plans.

Kidney Health Australia is grateful for the continued generosity of individuals and organisations in the community, who support the ongoing program and running costs of the Big Red Kidney Bus.

Kidney Health Australia urges people and families living with kidney disease to book holiday dialysis, a familiarisation visit, or request more information about the bus. Phone 1800 454 363 or email bigredkidneybus@kidney.org.au or visit www.kidney.org.au/bus.

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Kidney Health Australia is a national health care charity with a vision 'to save and improve the lives of people living in Australia affected by kidney disease'.

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