

MEDIA RELEASE

14 October 2018

EMBARGOED UNTIL 15 OCTOBER

Kidney Health Australia officially opens new Kidney Transplant House in South Australia

People living in rural areas that require lifesaving kidney transplant surgery will now be able to recover at a new home away from home in Kent Town, Adelaide.

On Monday 15 October, Kidney Health Australia will officially open South Australia's first Emorgo Kidney Transplant House with a special screening of the documentary 'Dying to Live' at the Adelaide Film Festival.

The film highlights several challenges endured by people fighting chronic kidney disease, and highlights important issues relating to organ transplantation and donation rates in Australia.

One of the many ways Kidney Health Australia supports people living with kidney disease is through the Kidney Transplant Housing program. The program provides free short-term accommodation for rural and regional kidney patients to rest and recover from transplant surgery or undergo home dialysis training and education.

The new apartment in Kent Town was only made possible through the generosity of the Emorgo Foundation who funded the purchase of the property.

Chris Forbes, CEO of Kidney Health Australia, said, "Living far away from metropolitan transplant hospitals can be a major barrier for rural and regional patients as they incur substantial travel and accommodation costs, pre and post-surgery. So we are incredibly thankful to the Emorgo Foundation for their ongoing support of our Kidney Transplant Housing program. Without their generosity we simply would not have been able to provide this critical service to kidney patients waiting for a life-saving transplant."

Ursula Steinberger, 63, from Port Augusta, underwent a second kidney transplant in July this year and stayed for three weeks in the Emorgo Kidney Transplant House in Kent Town. Ursula said, "The unit is beautiful. It had everything we needed and it was a joy to have our own home space. It was only an 8 minute walk to the hospital for my daily assessments, and was so convenient. We had to stay in a caravan park for my first transplant, so this time round was much better for us."

Kidney Health Australia's Clinical Director, Dr Shilpa Jesudason, said "In South Australia, we do around 80-90 kidney transplants a year. Many of these patients travel from regional and rural areas. Having accessibility to suitable post-operative accommodation, and being close to the hospital when they need it the most, can make all the difference to patient transplant outcomes."

The accommodation in Adelaide will support patients from South Australia, Broken Hill and the Northern Territory. And each year it will support about 25-35 people living with chronic kidney disease.

See more about Kidney Health Australia's transplant housing program at www.kidney.org.au/kidney-transplant-housing or contact transplanthousing@kidney.org.au to make a booking.

The screening of 'Dying to Live' commences at 6pm tonight at the GU Film House in Adelaide and will be followed by a special Q&A session hosted by Amanda Blair. Q&A panellists include recent transplant recipient and guest of Emorgo Kidney Transplant House, Ursula Steinberger; Kidney Health Australia's Clinical Director, Dr Shilpa Jesudason as well as 'Dying to Live' Film Director, Richard Todd; Lisa Hansen, cast member; Stewart Moodie, State Medical Director of DonateLife SA and Oren Klemich, parent of transplant donor and member of the Organ and Tissue Authority Board.

Now in its 50th year, 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'.

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For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:
Phone: 0473 120 023 or email: media@kidney.org.au
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