



Canberra Region Kidney Support Group

# Kidney News

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the CRKSG

With assistance from the ACT Government under the Community Support and Infrastructure Grants Program

## Governor General Launches Kidney Health Week 24-30 May 2009

**The Governor General and Patron in Chief of Kidney Health Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, officially launched Kidney Health Week 2009 at the Canberra Hospital on 26<sup>th</sup> May before visiting the Hospital's dialysis unit.**

Anne Wilson, Chief Executive of Kidney Health Australia said with one in three Australians at increased risk of kidney disease, the need for people to keep their blood pressure down to reduce the risk of damaging their kidneys is a major target in the battle against Chronic Kidney Disease in Australia.

Ms Wilson said "high blood pressure affects 1 in 4 Australians and recent research has revealed that 50% of patients do not have blood pressure managed to the target levels.

"Research has also shown that 80% of patients with failed kidneys had high blood pressure which is a major contributor to Chronic Kidney Disease with CKD being responsible for 12% of all hospital admissions in 2007."



Governor General HE Ms  
Quentin Bryce AC

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released earlier this year showed that diseases of the kidney and urinary tract have jumped to 10th on the leading cause of death list with 3230 deaths in 2007 being attributed as the single underlying cause.

This number has increased 123% in the last decade. Most of this increase appears to be due to an increase in chronic kidney failure deaths that have risen 148% in the last decade - 2046 deaths in 2007 compared with 1386 in 1998, with a striking 133% rise over the last 3 years.

A highlight of the 2009 Kidney Health Week launch was the official recognition of two Canberra residents who received Kidney Health Australia Operation Angel Awards for their outstanding contribution to assisting people with Chronic Kidney Disease.

Bill Handke cares for his wife Jenny who has kidney disease, requiring dialysis regularly. Jenny, like hundreds of other Australians is hopeful of eventually receiving a kidney transplant. Bill is head of the Kidney Health Australia Consumer Group.

David Parker has suffered from Chronic Kidney Disease from birth and started on di-

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Governor General Launches Kidney Health Week                  | 1 |
| ACT Operation Angels Announced at National Kidney Health Week | 2 |
| BIG RED BBQ held in Canberra at Parliament House              | 3 |
| Kidney Health Awareness Week — ACT                            | 3 |
| Calendar of Events  | 5 |
| Operation Angel Awards—Sydney                                 | 5 |

## ACT Operation Angels Announced at National Kidney Health Week Launch

**The Governor General and Patron in Chief of Kidney Health Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, officially launched Kidney Health Week at the Canberra Hospital on Tuesday 26 May 2009.**

A highlight of the 2009 Kidney Health Week launch was the official recognition of two Canberra residents, Bill Handke and David Parker, who received Kidney Health Australia Operation Angel Awards for their outstanding contribution to assisting people with Chronic Kidney Disease.



*Left: Operation Angel recipient David Parker, Debra Parker, the Governor General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Jenny Handke and Bill Handke Operation Angel recipient at the launch of Kidney Health Week at the Canberra Hospital.*

*(Continued from page 1)*

alysis in 2005 and he received a transplant in 2008. David is involved with seven different boards and advisory committees nationally and in the ACT working on organ donation, renal service delivery and public health and consumer advocacy.

Ms Wilson said Chronic Kidney Disease if detected at an early stage is treatable and patients may never have to undertake the extreme treatment of going onto dialysis three times a week when their kidneys fail. Kidney Health Australia encourages everyone to look after their health and reduce the risks of developing the disease by maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Chronic Kidney Disease Fact - Although Indigenous Australians represent less than 2.5% of the national population, they account for approximately 10% of people commencing kidney replacement therapy.

## BIG RED BBQ held in Canberra at Parliament House

The BIG RED BBQ - the Healthy Choice, a part of Kidney Health Australia's national community awareness program to promote healthy food and lifestyle to help prevent kidney disease in Australia was held during Kidney Health Week at Parliament House, Canberra on Tuesday 26 May 2009.

The purpose was to raise public awareness about the benefit to kidney health for

people to eat well at BBQs: no fatty sausages, but nice lean meat and vegetables. The Deputy Prime Minister, Ms Julia Gillard and Rob de Castella (a Kidney Health Ambassador) helped wield the tongs as well as a few other politicians. WIN TV helped spread the message on their news that night. It is a real advantage having people like Julia Gillard, Rob de Castella and the Governor General, Ms Quentin Bryce, all promoting kidney health.

The food for the BBQ was provided free of charge by Fiona Wright of the Terrace Cafe at Parliament House.



Left: Tim Mathieson, Kidney Health Australia Health Ambassador, in charge of the BIG RED BBQ, whilst Anne Wilson, CEO Kidney Health Australia, The Hon. Julia Gillard, Deputy Prime Minister and Billy Kidney supervise.



Left: Robert de Castella, Kidney Health Australia Health Ambassador, Ms Jodie Campbell MP, Federal Member for Bass and Tim Mathieson, Kidney Health Australia Health Ambassador serving the BIG RED BBQ food at Parliament House Canberra.

## Kidney Health Awareness Week — ACT

The ACT Launch of Kidney Health Week 2009 was hosted at the Exhibition Room of the ACT Legislative Assembly on the morning of Friday 22 May. WIN Television's Jessica Good graciously acted as MC. ACT Senator Kate Lundy represented local politicians on the stage and Jeremy Hanson from the ACT Legislative Assembly was in the audience.

Dr. Girish Talaulikar, director of Renal Services at Canberra Hospital, spoke about critical issues in coping with the increasing incidence of renal disease that is occurring as the Australian population ages and survives longer than previous generations. Early detection of persons at risk, and treatment of precursors to renal failure such as high blood pressure, can lead to better outcomes for both the individual at risk and the community that would otherwise bear the cost of providing dialysis. Girish also spoke of the essential role of allied health professions in achieving this goal, ie dieticians, social workers and nurse practitioners amongst others.



David Parker

David Parker, from the Kidney Health Australia consumer representatives committee for the ACT, supported Girish's claims and added more information from the perspective of the health service consumer. In the ACT, transport to dialysis is an issue for many patients that find they no longer have the ability to travel by their own means. Also, home dialysis has become an increasingly difficult option for many patients to contemplate



Dr. Girish Talaulikar

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

as the increased cost of the water and electricity used has not been met by the trivial concessions made to home dialysis patients.

Senator Kate Lundy delivered an extensive account of the various government initiatives and investments in renal health services and transplantation, particularly the Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority.

The Canberra Times and WIN News provided good coverage of the event. This coverage has created greater awareness of renal health issues in the community and hopefully will lead to some of those people at risk of going on to develop renal problems taking some action now, before it is too late.



*Taking blood pressure in Woden.*

### **Blood Pressure Readings at Woden**

During Kidney Health Awareness Week, nurses from the Canberra Hospital offered shoppers free blood pressure readings at Woden shopping centre on Friday 29 May. Information from Kidney Health Australia was distributed to interested passers-by.

### **Service of Thanksgiving**

The annual service of thanksgiving for the gift of organ and tissue donation and transplantation was held in the Members Dining Room of Old Parliament

House on Saturday May 2. The occasion was an opportunity for those whose life has been changed by such a gift to recognise the generosity of their usually unknown benefactors.

### **ACT KHA Consumers Advocacy**

KHA has a small consumer advocacy group lobbying the ACT government and the NSW government for improvements to the service provided to patients served by the Canberra Hospital. Two members of the committee received Operation Angel awards from KHA this year. The group has been particularly focussed on the improvement of transport services for patients that travel long distances or need assistance to get to dialysis at the dialysis centres in Canberra; and the improvement of the subsidies that are supposed to support home dialysis patients. The assistance home dialysis patients receive for their additional cost of electricity and water has decreased rather than increased over the last few years. Also the group has been concerned about the low rate of organ donation in NSW that appears to be the consequence of mixed messages that are received as a result of NSW persisting with the tick-box on driver's licenses. By now it should be clear that the Australian Organ Donation Register is the best place to have your intentions recorded. The committee can be contacted through Bill Handke, [handke@grapevine.net.au](mailto:handke@grapevine.net.au) or on 6231-7461.



*Senator Kate Lundy*



*Kate Lundy with donor families and quilt at the thanksgiving service*

## **Organ Donor Registration**

If you are viewing this newsletter on-line, click on the following link to register as an organ donor. Organ donor registration is completely voluntary. If you register you will receive a donor card similar to the one to the right.

<https://www2.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pext/registerAodr/Pages/DonorRegistration.jsp>



## Calendar of Events

### Support Group Meetings.

When: Quarterly on first Tuesday of each month.  
4<sup>th</sup> November 2008, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

Where: The Pearce Community Centre  
Building 1, Collett Place  
Pearce ACT 2607.

When: 7:30 pm.

**2009 AGM Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August at 2:00pm**

All welcome

## Operation Angel Awards—Sydney

By Brad Rossiter of Eurobodalla Renal Support and Transplant Awareness group

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May, Lorae and I flew from Moruya Airport at 5.40pm to Sydney Domestic Airport. We haven't flown for well over 20 years, this proved to be very exciting, indeed. As we progressed north, Lorae could see the lights of Batemans Bay, with our Bridge a feature. The flight duration being well under one hour, with the flight crew looking after us extremely well.

On arrival at Sydney domestic, picking up our bag we had a nice ride in a comfortable taxi to the McCure Hotel. We were well looked after with a porter taking our bag to our room, pleasant receptionist. Good room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Looking for a meal, we approached the Chinese restaurant in the foyer but decided on a room service Hamburger & chips, more than enough for the two of us. Self Service breakfast was excellent and plenty of it.

Off to Kidney Health Australia "Angel Award 2009" at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Extremely proud to be nominated and receive an Angel Award and to meet others who are involved with Kidney Health Australia, most of whom I have only spoken to by phone, great to put faces to the voices.

We had some time to fill in prior to our flight home. Deciding to head down to Darling Harbor. I have not been to this part of Sydney for well over 20 years, Lorae saying that she cannot remember ever being there.

With the weather not in our favor for a harbor side walk we explored Star City. We had a bite to eat and a look in some of the shops. We decided to check out a gaming room (big spenders we are!). AMAZING! We put our \$1.00 in a poker machine, winning \$22.00, took it, got a Taxi back to the Airport

The Rex employee at the check in counter enquired on how I lost my legs. Lorae and I explained what life has been and the reason for Lorae and I being in Sydney, the lady said she had heard of the KHA Angel Award. The lady said she is an Australian Organ Donor having filled in the registration form. We spoke of my organ transplant and the volunteer work Lorae & I conduct at Batemans Bay.

The Rex employee told us to head on down to the waiting room, were there shall be another Rex employee whom she will contact, we may wait for our flight home in the VIP Room, where there are a few freebies, food, drink, comfort, etc. This was a grand gesture, much appreciated. That contributed to a very special experience for Lorae and me.

We arrived at Moruya Airport 8.20pm Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2009

Lorae & I wish to thank Anne Wilson, CEO, Kidney Health Australia, Jane Armstrong and Stephen Anderson.

This experience fits "well" into the jigsaw of our lives.



Left, Lorae and Brad with the Angel Award and Dr Andrew McDonald MP, New South Wales Parliamentary Secretary for Health

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc  
PO Box 5051 GARRAN ACT 2605.  
ABN: 77 396 063 641

**Last Name:** ..... **First Name:** .....

**Address:**.....

**Email:** .....

**Phone No:** .....

I would like to make a voluntary donation to CRKSG for the amount of: \$..... Membership is free. All donations \$2 or more are tax deductible. Cheque/Money Order payable to CRKSG Inc. Please accept this application for membership of the Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc.

**Signature:** ..... **Date:**.....

Post Form to:

The Treasurer  
Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc  
PO Box 5051  
GARRAN ACT 2605.

NOTE: This form may also be used to notify a change of address/contact details.