

Canberra Region Kidney Support Group

Kidney News

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

Kidney Health Week

Because this issue will be published around about the time of Kidney Health Week the content will be devoted largely to kidney health.

Kidney Health Week was launched on Monday 26th May 2008 by Nicola Roxon, the Federal Minister for Health and the Ageing. The theme for Kidney Health Week is “No Warning Signs”. Kidney Health Week 2008 also marks the 40th birthday of Kidney Health Australia.

A person can lose up to 90 per cent of their kidney function before they feel sick. Up to two million Australians could have some form of kidney disease and not know it.

Chronic kidney disease can often be caused by preventable factors such as poor nutrition or lack of physical activity. Reducing kidney disease is closely associated with a reduction in cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.



Nicola Roxon — Minister for Health and the Ageing



Angela Reddy, Director KHA, introducing Kidney Health Week

There is a need to focus on people who are most at risk of these conditions, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, for whom the rate of treated end-stage kidney disease is eight times higher than non-Indigenous Australians.

The Australian Government is actively working towards reducing the risk factors that lead to these diseases, including its decision to create the National Preventative Health Taskforce to provide evidence-based advice to governments and health providers on preventive health programs and strategies.

In the recent Budget, the Government announced it would allocate \$65.1 million to list sevelamar (Renagel®) and \$166.4 million to list cinacalcet (Sensipar®) under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme over four years.

Both drugs can help people suffering with chronic kidney disease.

The Government is also committing new funding of \$5.3 million over five years to improve access to dialysis services for remote communities in the Northern Territory. This measure is a response to the fact that the territory has some of the highest rates of kidney disease in the country, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Government also committed \$7 million to build a renal dialysis unit at the North Lakes Health Precinct in Queensland.

All Australians are urged to take note of the message being promoted this week. We can all do more to live healthier, active lives, and ultimately that can mean avoiding conditions like chronic kidney disease.



L to R: Angela Reddy, Chairman, Kidney Health Australia; Billy Kidney; The Hon. Nicola Roxon, Federal Minister for Health cutting the 40th Birthday Cake; and Anne Wilson CEO KHA at the official launch in Canberra. (Photo courtesy KHA)

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Kidney Health Australia Targets Dialysis Blow Out With Prevention Strategy

One third of all admissions to public hospitals - 2000 patients every day, is due to dialysis. The number of kidney patients is growing at 8.5%.

CEO of Kidney Health Australia Anne Wilson said, "In 2005/2006 a total of 731,000 visits out of a total of 2.215 million hospital admissions were related to kidney disease."

Ms Wilson said Kidney Health Australia will target the increase long term with education, community awareness and testing of high risk groups. This will include taking the Kidney health message into the schools with Billy Kidney who will be used to alert children to the issues of kidney disease.

On average, six new patients are accepted onto the Australian dialysis program each day. The cost of treating a patient with dialysis is \$72,000 per annum. The number of patients on dialysis is increasing at 6% per annum. Australia's health bill for treating kidney disease is growing at \$1 million a week.

Ms Wilson said, "Kidney failure is the seventh most frequent cause of death in Australia and exceeds road deaths, suicide, and breast cancer in number.

"Over 40 people die each and every day from kidney failure in Australia with 11.3% of all deaths are due to or associated with kidney failure.

"As many as 2 million Australians may be affected by early-stage kidney disease and not even know it making it the silent killer with only 5% of the general population being aware of the role their kidneys perform, according to international research."

The main job of the kidneys is to remove toxins and excess water from our blood. The kidneys are roughly the size of two fists and are located deep in our abdomen, beneath our rib cage.

Every day our kidneys filter an average of 200 litres of blood - a quantity that would fill 20 buckets!

"Besides this impressive, daily feat, kidneys also help to control our blood pressure, to produce red blood cells and to keep our bones healthy," Ms Wilson said.



Anne Wilson — CEO Kidney Health Australia

Angels Recognised in Fight Against Kidney Disease

Barbara Harvie, a renal nurse working at Canberra Hospital who has made a significant contribution for indigenous health, nursing education programs and resources, and Sheila Perryman a kidney patient who for forty six years has managed to avoid dialysis through diet and lifestyle changes, will both become part of Kidney Health Australia's Operation Angel Program.

To celebrate its 40th Birthday Kidney Health Australia has recognised Forty Kidney Health Angels with Operation Angel awards across Australia to people from all walks of life for their work and involvement in kidney health issues.

The ACT Operation Angel induction will take place this morning at Parliament House Canberra as part of the launch of Kidney Health Week when Barbara and Sheila will be presented with their Operation Angel Awards by the Federal Minister for Health, the Hon. Nicola Roxon.

Anne Wilson, Chief Executive of Kidney Health Australia said, the official recognition of such a diverse range of people from so many walks of life reveals the many faces of kidney disease of which one in three Australians is at increased risk.

"Operation Angel recognizes and promotes the work and care carried out by hundreds of people daily in hospitals and medical clinics to assist over fourteen thousand Australians to remain alive on dialysis. It also recognizes the commitment of family, friends and work colleagues of kidney patients."

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The Operation Angel Award recipients from Canberra were Barbara Harvie and Sheila Perryman. Their citations were as follows:

Barbara Harvie

Working at Canberra Hospital, Barbara Harvie works tirelessly for her chronic kidney disease and transplant patients. She also gives a lot of her personal time to do fantastic work for indigenous health, the Kidney Check Australia Taskforce program, creates nursing education programs and resources, and is a Nephrology Nurse Practitioner pioneer.

Sheila Perryman

Sheila has been a generous volunteer for Kidney Health Australia not only assisting in our Canberra office but also as a speaking volunteer, taking our messages to the wider community.

Sheila, 71, was diagnosed with a renal problem after giving birth in 1962. And yet 46 years later she has never had to resort to dialysis or a transplant. A former nurse and Day Care Supervisor, Sheila puts her present situation down to a number of factors - diet, support from family and friends, the work of her local renal clinic, and a positive frame of mind.



Barbara Harvie (r) with Anne Wilson (l) and Nicola Roxon.
(Photo courtesy KHA)



Sheila Perryman (r) with Anne Wilson (l) and Nicola Roxon.
(Photo courtesy KHA)

Billy Kidney Starts the Race for Healthy Kidneys

Kidney Health Australia is using Kidney Health Week 2008 to promote kidney health awareness to schools with a program aimed at alerting people to the amazing role their kidneys play and by also promoting water as nature's choice of drink.

Anne Wilson CEO of Kidney Health Australia said research has shown that less than 5% of the general community worldwide is aware of where their kidneys are and what they do.

"We are keen to get children understanding the function of their kidneys and how to keep them healthy.

"This is also a message we believe students can take home to parents."

Billy Kidney will promote his tips to keep the kidneys healthy and will also encourage schools to promote Kidney Health to parents and the wider community.



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Billy Kidney's Health Tips

Tips for a healthy diet:

- * Eat lots of fruit, vegetables, legumes and wholegrain bread and rice.
- * Eat some lean meat such as chicken and fish at least once a week.
- * Eat reduced-fat and low-fat dairy products
- * Limit the amount of fatty foods you eat, such as fried fish and chips, fried or baked chicken, and potato crisps.
- * Lower your salt intake. Buy low or no-salt products and don't add salt to food or the dinner table setting.
- * Eat more at home, not take-away - less temptation



Exercise

The benefits of regular exercise are wide-reaching. Not only can it help to maintain and reduce weight, it can also reduce the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes, risk factors for kidney disease.

Smoking

If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do, quit! This is the simplest, most important lifestyle habit to change to reduce the risk of kidney disease. People who smoke are three times more likely to have reduced kidney function, and have a four to five times greater risk of heart attack and stroke.

Performance-testing your kidneys will help keep your kidneys in top gear.

Messages for Parents

CHECK YOUR RISK:

Try this quick quiz to assess whether you are at risk of kidney disease. Tick if you:

- Are diabetic
- Have high blood pressure
- Have a family history of kidney disease
- Are over 50
- Are a smoker
- Are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent

If you answered **YES** to one or more of the above then you are at risk of kidney disease

What should you do?

Visit your local doctor TODAY and ask for a Kidney Performance test.

The test can include a:

- Blood pressure test
- Blood test
- Urine test
- Lifestyle assessment guidelines

Calendar of Events

Support Group Meetings.

When: Quarterly on second Tuesday of each month.

13th May 2008 and 12th August 2008.

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

When: 7:30 pm.

2008 AGM: 2:00pm on Sunday 10 August 2008 in the Pearce Community Centre

All welcome

One in Three Canberrans at Risk of Kidney Disease

The ACT contribution to the 2008 Kidney Health Week was a stand in the Canberra Shopping Centre promoting kidney health. Thursday 29th May was the day and the stand was in operation from 11:00am until a little after 2:00pm. As part of kidney health awareness nurses from the renal unit provided blood pressure checks for passers-by. This offer was taken up by quite a number of people.

A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Janine Bevan in recognition of her tireless efforts in promoting kidney health and in supporting kidney patients and their carers. Unfortunately Janine could not be present for the presentation. The award was accepted on her behalf by Sheila Perryman, one of the ACT recipients of the Operation Angel awards at the federal launch of Kidney Health Week on Monday 26th May.

At approximately 1:15pm, Dr Girish Talaulikar, Head of the Renal Unit, spoke on the importance of checks for kidney problems and the maintenance of Kidney Health.

Katy Gallagher ACT Minister of Health, then officially launched Kidney Health Week in the ACT and then also spoke on the importance of maintaining kidney health. Below is a precis of what she had to say.

One in three Canberrans is at risk of contracting some form of kidney disease, ACT Health Minister, Katy Gallagher MLA said today (Thursday 29 May 2008).

Ms Gallagher was speaking at the launch of Kidney Health Week to highlight the realities for thousands of Australians living with kidney disease.

She said chronic kidney disease was the fastest growing chronic disease in Australia.

"It is insidious as there are few warning signs and people can lose 90% of their kidney function without feeling chronically ill. A startling and very disturbing fact is that 40 people die each and every day of kidney disease: more than heart disease, more than breast cancer and more than from diabetes. There are currently 14,000 people living on renal replacement therapy in the form of dialysis and transplantation across the country," she said.

Ms Gallagher also went on to say, "In the ACT region there are over 300 people living with kidney failure and 135 living with a renal transplant. By encouraging regular medical checks and early detection we can start to curb the number of people in our community living with chronic kidney disease," Ms Gallagher said.



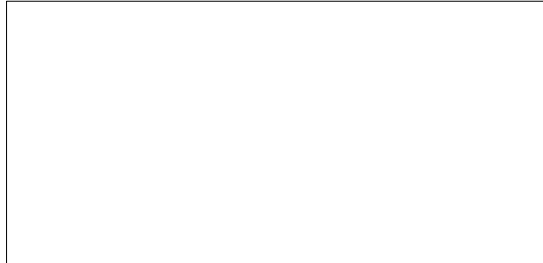
Katy Gallagher launching Kidney Health Week in the ACT



Function at the Community Dialysis Centre during Kidney Healthy Week

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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.