

MEDIA RELEASE
December 16, 2015

New report confirms dialysis patient transport woes: Kidney Health Australia

New research conducted by Kidney Health Australia, published in the current issue of *Renal Society of Australasia (RSA) Journal*, highlights that patients living with kidney disease often suffer from inadequate transport support.

The 'Challenges in methods and availability of transport for dialysis patients' report surveyed Australian renal units around the nation, with staff at the coal-face confirming that the transport system for dialysis treatment is inconsistent, has variations in availability and leaves many patients significantly out of pocket.

The journal article highlighted that dialysis patients are often slugged with high parking fees at hospitals, and those relying on transport support can struggle to obtain assistance to return home after dialysis treatment. The situation is often exacerbated if their treatments are outside regular business hours or fall on weekends.

Kidney Health Australia CEO and Managing Director, Anne Wilson, said that addressing transport issues will go a long way to benefiting kidney consumers, their families and the health system.

"Transport is a factor that affects patient treatment choices and quality of life. Dialysis is a necessary and lifesaving treatment, and we know that transport is one of the biggest burdens on both renal units, and patients," said Ms Wilson.

"Dialysis patients are unique as they require ongoing treatment three times a week, every week. For those too unwell or unable to drive themselves, a strong and reliable transport system is critical to maintaining their life saving treatment."

"The report identified that half of all patients seeking assisted transport have difficulty getting to, or from treatment. For those who are able to drive, they face high parking fees – especially in the large cities – of up to \$15 per treatment. For someone on dialysis, this may add up to almost \$2,300 a year," she added.

"Having parking provided or reserved for dialysis appointments would go a long way in reducing patient out of pocket costs, and a coordinated approach in establishing databases of transport services to identify access issues would be a good first step."

Sadly, almost half of those surveyed during the research indicated a lack of subsidised transport for rural patients as a key concern.

"We often forget that treatment for end stage kidney disease is not just dialysis," said Ms Wilson, "It's a routine, a minimum of three return trips a week, every single week. Every extra hurdle, every extra cost takes its toll – we need to think about the patient's journey, and work smarter to support them."

The full journal article is now available [online](#). For further information on Kidney Health Australia's advocacy work regarding patient transport issues, visit kidney.org.au.



Kidney Health Australia, formerly the Australian Kidney Foundation, is a national health care charity with a vision 'to save and improve the lives of Australians affected by kidney disease'. As the national peak body, Kidney Health Australia promotes good kidney health through delivery of programs in education, advocacy, research and support.

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