Anglesea holiday a winner!

Helen Williams magic two weeks away by the sea

Haemodialysis patient Helen Williams from rural Victoria said she was privileged to have a two-week coastal holiday at Anglesea, Victoria, earlier this year thanks to the presence of the Big Red Kidney Bus at the popular beachside destination. Helen and her husband Willy went away with three other couples, just like they used to do before she went on haemodialysis.

“I have never been able to do this in summer because a dialysis chair is not available at most of the public hospitals. As I live in the bush, we do not go to the beach very often, so it was a joy to go on a holiday in Anglesea to swim, hike, play golf and experience the magic of the Big Red Kidney Bus,” she said.

“The Big Red Kidney Bus is marvellous. It has given us more freedom and flexibility to go where we want without having to organise a holiday a year in advance. To be able to stay in Anglesea just around the corner from the Big Red Kidney Bus at the Big 4 Holiday Park was so convenient. It is the ‘magic’ bus and the nurses are angels. I cannot express how grateful I am to Vince Tripodi for the dream, Monash Health for the professional dialysis service, and Kidney Health Australia for working with Vince on the concept and making his dream a reality for people on haemodialysis across Australia.”

Helen was diagnosed in 1994 with Chronic Kidney Disease and in 2004 she had to commence dialysis after becoming extremely unwell. She was on Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) initially for 7 years, which allowed Helen and her husband Willy to have some great holidays, such as driving across the Nullarbor and spending time in Kalgoorlie. She loves fishing, golf, swimming and travelling. When her health declined, it was recommended that Helen go onto Haemodialysis (HD). She has been on HD for nearly 3 years now. After the first HD session Helen broke down in tears because she felt so good. She had never thought she would feel that well again. It was amazing.

Helen and her husband Willy decided that they would like to be trained in Home Haemodialysis. For 3 months they travelled 3 hours from their rural Victorian property to attend training. Sadly, Helen developed cancer before completing the training. For 6 weeks she travelled a long way every day to have radiation treatment. At that time, she chose to start PD again because the cancer treatment had made her exhausted and she felt a great need to get away for a while, which they did.
Helen eventually finished the Home Haemodialysis Training one year later. “Home Haemodialysis is fantastic for me. I have dialysis for 6 hours every second day and I feel well. Having a supportive husband has made this a normal part of our lives. Willy’s role is paramount, he does the needling and we set up the machine together. We are thinking of putting a dialysis machine in a caravan.”

The Rotary Club of Croydon hops on board the Big Red Kidney Bus Project

Australia’s second Big Red Kidney Bus is in the planning, thanks to a community partnership between Kidney Health Australia and the Rotary Club of Croydon.

The Big Red Kidney Bus has become a lifeline to kidney patients around Australia who are now able to take much needed holidays to beautiful destinations in Victoria where the Bus, providing holiday dialysis, is visiting.

Following the success of the first Bus, the Rotary Club of Croydon in Victoria has undertaken to raise $150,000 to get the second Big Red Kidney Bus on the road.

Kidney Health Australia CEO Anne Wilson said “With a second Bus now in the planning, we will consider expanding the reach of the Kidney Health Australia Big Red Kidney Bus to other states. We are immensely grateful to the Rotary Club of Croydon for its commitment to this excellent project and we look forward to working with the Club.”

From Queensland to the Big Red Kidney Bus

Nola and Chris Taylor chose Anglesea, Victoria, for a summer holiday because the coastal area along the Great Ocean Road is so beautiful. Their daughter found the Big Red Kidney Bus on the KHA website and they booked online.

“It is a great holiday here in Anglesea; we have done lots of exercise every day. The Big Red Kidney Bus is fantastic and the Monash Health Nurses create such a welcoming community on the bus.”

Nola, who has a family history of polycystic kidney disease, said she became very sick very quickly in 2006. At the time of her kidney failure, she was working 16-hour days, including night shifts, and she was drinking large volumes of coffee to stay awake.

“I wish someone had educated me about my risk of kidney failure and also what my eGFR was. I had no idea. I hope that lots of people support the KHA Big Red Kidney Bus Project. My husband and I have had our very first holiday in 10 years, since I went on dialysis in 2006. I just want to sincerely thank everyone.”

Nola is currently on the transplant list.

President of the Rotary Club of Croydon, Richard Gilham, said “I am excited about the Big Red Kidney Bus Project and the involvement of the Rotary Club of Croydon. We will raise all the funds to fully refurbish the next Big Red Kidney Bus, which will be a retired bus donated to KHA. He said there was potential for other
**From NSW to the Big Red Kidney Bus**

Peter Molony had been researching holiday locations where dialysis was available and was considering Bali, where accommodation was included. He heard about the Big Red Kidney Bus and found it online. Peter and his wife are from NSW and he works part time. He has been on dialysis for one year and Anglesea, accessing dialysis on the Big Red Kidney Bus, was their first holiday.

One of the big highlights for Peter was that it was only a 5-minute walk to the Big Red Kidney Bus at the Anglesea Big 4 Holiday Park.

“I am on home dialysis and the Big Red Kidney Bus has been fantastic. I have had a holiday, my wife had a holiday from dialysis and I have caught up with family.”

Peter and his wife are currently looking forward to another holiday in Albury/Wodonga in spring.

**Raising money for the Big Red Kidney Bus**

Presenting the KHA Great Wall of China Challenge trekkers raising money for the Big Red Kidney Bus National Development.

David Watson, Victoria  
"I have been affected by chronic kidney problems for the past six years. With the help of a great doctor, we have increased my kidney function from approximately 17% 12 months ago to around 60% at the moment. While my kidney function won’t improve anymore, I am able to live a fairly normal life while this stays stable. Most others that have serious kidney problems are not so lucky. The Big Red Kidney Bus Project does not receive any Government Funding, so with your generosity people in our community will be able live life a little more comfortably.”


Margaret and Megan McCrea, Queensland  
"We are a mother daughter duo taking part in the Great Wall of China Challenge in honour of our husband and father, James, who was diagnosed with end stage renal failure in 2006 and sadly passed away from kidney disease only a few months ago. James’ renal failure and dialysis impacted everyone’s lives. There is no cure and there is a lack of Government funding. We have launched a fundraising page to raise money for the Big Red Kidney Bus Project and are asking the community to support us.


**Big Red Kidney Bus Melbourne Holiday Location**

KHA and Monash Health are pleased to announce that the official location of the Big Red Kidney Bus Holiday Dialysis from 21 December 2015 to 30 January 2016 will be The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne are internationally renowned botanical gardens located near the centre of Melbourne on the south bank of the Yarra River. We are indebted to Professor Tim Entwisle, Director and Chief Executive, for his support for this amazing community partnership, and to James Robinson, Project Officer, who has worked tirelessly with the KHA and Monash Health on the logistics and site management of this project. We hope that families will take advantage of this unique opportunity to visit Melbourne over Christmas and throughout January 2016 to enjoy the Boxing Day Test Cricket, the Australian Open Tennis, the Aquarium, shopping, restaurants, theatre, and the beauty of the Royal Botanic Gardens.
Demi-Lee Pye, New South Wales

“In 2014 I was diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease with End Stage Renal Failure. I had my right kidney removed early August 2014 and was on the road to recovery. Having CKD has changed my life in many ways and has given me the passion to educate others on a ‘silent’ disease. I am motivated to complete the Great Wall of China Challenge to raise awareness for those amazing and strong individuals who are affected by kidney disease, and give dialysis patients and their families the opportunity to have a holiday with the Big Red Kidney Bus.”


Marion Gathercole, Western Australia

The Big Red Kidney Bus - what a wonderful initiative. It only took me five minutes to accept the Great Wall of China Challenge for the Big Red Kidney Bus after being invited to join the adventure by a friend whom I met on a Pedal for Prostate challenge in Vietnam and Cambodia. I realise how lucky I am to be able to go on a holiday and I am committed to supporting a project that provides people on dialysis with an opportunity to have possibly their first holiday ever away from hospital. The Big Red Kidney Bus has already had a significant impact on people with kidney disease. Life is just a few precious moments.


Heidi Drenkhahn, New South Wales

“I have chosen to do this trek because I work every week with rural dialysis patients who never have the opportunity to go on a holiday as to travel away from home means being away from their life-sustaining treatment. This trip will be raising money to support Kidney Health Australia’s Big Red Kidney Bus, which allows people on dialysis to enjoy holidays with friends and families whilst still having access to their vital dialysis treatment. I believe in this cause and want to make enjoyable holidays a reality for those who can only dream of such a thing.”


David Roberts, South Australia

“Joy, my wife, has kidney disease, so I have seen firsthand how it can affect a person’s quality of life. I am taking on the Great Wall of China Challenge because I believe the Big Red Kidney Bus is such a valuable service to the Australian community. It enables those on dialysis, and their carers, to go away for holidays - some who have not been able to for over 20 years! I turned 75 this year, I’ve always been an avid fan of bush walking, and I imagine this journey will challenge me both physically and mentally!”


Jo Fairbairn, Victoria

“I am supporting the Kidney Health Australia Big Red Kidney Bus Great Wall of China Challenge, because I love adventure holidays for a great cause. Some mums and dads and children have never had a holiday due to dialysis. Now they can. My goal is to enable KHA to have a Big Red Kidney Bus in every state and territory in Australia. We all love our holidays so let’s help Australian families with someone on dialysis to have a holiday, as well!”

Kidney Health Australia congratulates and thanks Di Kelly in WA for this fantastic poster she painted to promote Marion’s Great Wall of China Challenge.
## 2015/2016 Big Red Kidney Bus Holiday Destinations

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<th>HOLIDAY DESTINATION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>BOOKINGS CLOSE</th>
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| **Bright**  
22 August – 5 September 2015 | Big4 Holiday Park  
1-11 Mountbatten Ave, Bright VIC 3741  
03 5755 1064  
1800 033 188  
info@big4Bright.com.au | 10 August 2015 |
| **Albury/Wodonga**  
14 September – 24 October 2015 | Boathaven Holiday Park  
33 Boathaven Road, Ebden VIC 3691  
02 6020 6130  
1800 352 982  
boathaven@aspenparks.com.au | 30 August 2015 |
| **Yarrawonga**  
9 November – 12 December 2015 | Yarrawonga Holiday Park  
Burley Road, Yarrawonga VIC 3730  
03 5744 3420  
info@yarrawongaholidaypark.com.au | 18 October 2015 |
| **Melbourne**  
21 December 2015 – 30 January 2016 | Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne  
Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne  
bigredkidneybus@kidney.org.au  
1800 454 363 | 6 December 2015 |
| **Lakes Entrance**  
8 February – 19 March 2016 | Big4 Whitters Holiday Park  
55 Roadknight Street, Lakes Entrance VIC 3909  
03 5155 1343  
1800 039 006  
info@whiters.com.au | 24 January 2016 |

### Big Red Kidney Bus Nurse Recruitment

Nurses interested in being recruited to work on the BRKB, please contact Lesley Ross, Monash Health Big Red Kidney Bus Coordinator on 0408 784 433 or lesley.ross@monashhealth.org

### For more information

People on haemodialysis interested in receiving regular updates on the Big Red Kidney Bus Project or wishing to make a booking, please contact Kidney Health Australia:

**bigredkidneybus@kidney.org.au**  
Freecall 1800 454 363  
**kidney.org.au**