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## The Big Red Kidney Bus Project: Summary of Results

### Introduction

The Big Red Kidney Bus Project (BRKB) affords people an alternative means to receive dialysis whilst on holiday. The BRKB Project aims to provide safe, fully staffed mobile haemodialysis care, to enable people, their families and carers to take a break across a range of Victorian tourist destinations. Kidney Health Australia facilitates bookings whilst Monash Health oversees the clinical assessment and treatment.

### Methods

The health and wellbeing of those who received dialysis on the Big Red Kidney Bus was evaluated. Consenting participants completed a survey prior to and on completion of their treatment. A sample of service users provided feedback via telephone interviews.

### Results

Participating holidaymakers were overwhelmingly positive about the service and the standard of care they experienced. Participant demographics had no impact on participant responses. The total score on the Personal Wellbeing Index (a measure of subjective wellbeing) remained stable across the pre- and post-surveys. Mood scores also remained stable. **There were improvements in responses for eight of the nine individual mood items: three items (i.e., feeling tired, enthusiastic, and distressed) showed a small, but statistically significant, improvement.**

Nine symptoms were reported by more than half of the participants on the pre-survey, including feeling tired or lack of energy, muscle cramps, bone or joint pain, dry skin, itching, trouble falling asleep, trouble staying asleep, decreased interest in sex, and difficulty becoming sexually aroused. **There was a statistically significant decrease for three of these symptoms: feeling tired or lack of energy, muscle cramps, and dry skin.** There was also a decrease in the level of bother associated with 22 of the 30 symptoms between the pre- and post-surveys, including three that were statistically significant: bone or joint pain, muscle soreness, and cough. **The overall number of symptoms reported by participants decreased significantly.**

### Conclusion

The BRKB provides a service that is feasible and can improve some clinical symptoms for people on dialysis. The evidence indicates that an expansion of the model has the potential to influence the health of people on dialysis across Australia.

