

KIDNEY KIDS CAMP 2023 – DISCUSSION PAPER REGARDING CHANGES TO CAMP

The Kidney Health Australia National Kidney Kids Camp is a unique event which has amazingly been coordinated for over 25 years. A camp has not run each year however that has been the intent.

Before 1995, camps for children with chronic kidney disease were held in some states on the initiative of individuals and groups, usually paediatric renal units. The longest running camp was initiated by Monash Childrens Medical Centre in Victoria.

In order for the camps program to be sustainable with the appropriate medical care, it was determined that a larger organisational approach was needed.

Kidney Health Australia (KHA) agreed to regulate and coordinate all aspects of fundraising and administration in partnership with a co-host paediatric hospital that would manage the medical component. The camp has only been possible through the generous support and fundraising efforts of KHA via mainly the Kidney Kar Rally.

The first KHA National Kidney Kids Camp was held in 1995 in Victoria, attended by 61 children.

The 21st kids camp was held in May 2019 in Victoria for 115 children (72 kidney kids and 43 siblings), supported by 80 carers (63 volunteers, 13 medical staff and 4 KHA staff).

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has disrupted the camp causing its postponement in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

A review into camp was carried out incorporating the views and opinions of many key stakeholders and a discussion paper was presented Kidney Health Australia and the Health Professional Advisory Group (representatives of all participating paediatric hospitals) in late 2022 which was robustly discussed.

This review of camp and other kids and youth related activities included referral to the separate Child Safeguarding Framework process that was carried out in 2021/22 and the policies and procedures that were subsequently implemented to ensure the safety and welfare of our kids and youth.

This included suitable activities for young people and especially interstate travel and camps away from home where state education departmental school camp criteria was referenced.

The objectives of this camp remain similar to previous camps however there have been modifications proposed to this national camp based on the following:

- Review of recently held Kidney Kids Camps
- KHA's Child Safeguarding Framework (reviewed and implemented in 2021)
- KHA Kids and Youth Program (reviewed and implemented in 2022) which now includes offering multiple state-based Es-Caper events for all ages and families giving more kidney kids of all ages, siblings and parents the opportunity to connect and enjoy a fun event together at least twice per year, spending a considerable portion of our budget on these valued activities
- Costs of camp elements and sustainability (budget) including increasing airfares and insurances
- The impact of Covid-19 and confidence around travel and being away from home and local medical support

Proposed modifications included:

- Reducing the number of kids on camp to around 50 to 60 maximum
- Restricting the age to between 12 and 17 years corresponding to high school age

- Camp is open to kidney kids only (no siblings, unless they are recognised assistant carers)
- Reduced number of volunteers required, focus on kidney youth mentors as volunteers
- Reduced number of medical staff required

These changes to camp have been subsequently endorsed as a way forward this year and will be reviewed following the delivery of camp.

Kidney Kids Camp Objectives

1. To provide Kidney Kids with the opportunity to attend a national camp in a safe, medically supported environment where a variety of entertainment and structured adult-supervised activities are provided
2. To provide Kidney Kids an opportunity to personally develop, build informal support networks and to interact with peers with similar health issues
3. To give parents/caregivers four days of respite
4. To engage and develop our relationships with our Kidney Kids, parents/carers, volunteer supporters, renal community and other key stakeholder groups
5. To promote and increase the awareness of Kidney Health Australia's kids and youth programs nationally as the peak not-for-profit dedicated to improving the lives of people with kidney disease.

Medical criteria referenced for referral and eligibility for camp

- Children and young people with end stage kidney disease treated with haemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis
- Children and young people with end stage kidney disease treated with a kidney transplant
- Children and young people with advanced (stage IV-V) chronic kidney disease
- Children and young people with a kidney condition which does not fit the above criteria but has a high burden of care or significantly impacts their quality of life.
- Top priority- PD/HD/Transplant and those that may not be end stage but are quite hospitalised eg: aHUS on eculizumab, nephrotics needing regular alb/admissions. Age 12-17yr.

Proposed camp details:

- Camp has been arranged at YMCA Camp Warrawee located at 81 Byrnes Rd N, Joyner QLD 4500. 33 kms from Brisbane Airport and 30 kms from Qld Children's Hospital. Refer map - note that the distance and time indicated is Airport to Camp to Hospital combined. Runaway Bay camp on the Gold Coast did not have any dates available (June to Dec 2023)
- Dates currently booked are Thursday 6th to Sunday 9th July 2023 (end school hols QLD/VIC, mid school holidays NSW/WA/NT, end term 2 SA/TAS). This is trying to avoid Year 11 and 12 final exams but giving us enough time to plan and organise.