



Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Assistant Minister for Health
Senator for New South Wales
Deputy Leader of the Nationals in the Senate

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$15.3 Million for Purple House

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote Central Australia will reap the benefits of a funding boost to Western Desert Dialysis, also known as Purple House.

Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash, today announced funding of \$9 million over three years to continue delivery of dialysis services and a range of renal support activities in Alice Springs and remote communities in Central Australia.

The Australian Government and Western Desert Dialysis is working to finalise details of a funding agreement to provide a further \$6.3 million for the development of additional renal infrastructure in remote communities to assist renal patients to remain in these communities.

“This funding is a sign of the Government’s ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic kidney disease,” Minister Nash said.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in remote Central Australia experience end stage renal disease at a younger age and at a rate up to 20 times higher than the wider Australian population.

“Purple House does an amazing job working with dialysis patients and we’re very pleased to be able to provide this extra funding for renal services in the Central Australia,” Minister Nash said.

The Central Australia Renal Study estimated demand for dialysis treatment in Central Australia was likely to increase by as many as 214 patients over six years to 2017 – about 36 more renal patients each year.

In January 2015, there were 305 dialysis patients receiving treatment in Alice Springs. Of the 305, approximately 260 had relocated from remote Central Australian communities to access treatment. The NT Department of Health expects this number to increase to as many as 400 by 2018.

Purple House CEO, Sarah Brown, said the board and members are thrilled by the announcement and the funding will significantly increase the number of people they can help.

“Fifteen years ago, Pintupi people painted pictures and raised a million dollars at the Art Gallery of NSW. Their dream was to have a dialysis machine in Kintore and to look after their loved ones at home,” Ms Brown said.

“Today, we provide holistic services, Indigenous employment and dialysis across remote Australia.

“This funding will give people hope for the future and an opportunity for family to look after dialysis patients on country. Community ownership, the opportunity to demystify dialysis, and working towards reducing the incidence of renal disease in the future is crucial.

“We are proud that our model of care is being recognised and we thank the Minister for acknowledging the importance of our work.”

For more information about Purple House visit:

<http://www.westerndesertdialysis.com/>

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