



The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP

**Minister for Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health
Member for Hasluck**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Family friendly housing for kidney patients

A joint housing refurbishment project has delivered accessible, family friendly homes for Northern Territory renal patients.

Welcoming the completion of eight houses in Alice Springs and two in Tennant Creek, Indigenous Health Minister Ken Wyatt said collaboration between the Australian and Territory governments had yielded a win-win for some of the most vulnerable people in the NT.

“The recent Central Australia Renal Study identified accommodation as the greatest challenge to indigenous kidney patients moving to towns for dialysis,” Minister Wyatt said.

“After relocating, these patients and family members often ended up homeless, socially and culturally isolated, and in many instances having to live in town camps.

“We acted promptly, prioritising housing to help solve these challenges for families already under immense financial and emotional pressure from this debilitating disease.

“Now patients will be comfortably housed, within easy reach of clinical treatment.”

The Australian Government contributed \$6.3 million to refit and modify the homes, after Central Australian Affordable Housing (CAAH) won a grant from the NT Government to purchase and refurbish and retrofit 10 properties for families coming in from bush for renal treatment.

CAAH is an accredited, Aboriginal-managed Community Housing Association that manages more than 300 properties for Aboriginal people including the Town Camps of Alice Springs.

Minister Wyatt said Central Australia accounted for more than 640 patients known to have chronic kidney disease stages 3, 4 or 5.

“The problem is particularly high in the NT, where kidney health complications among indigenous people are compounded by remoteness and challenging living conditions,” he said.

The Government was now investing \$3.6 billion over four years from 2017-18 for the Indigenous Australians’ Health Program, an increase of \$724 million compared with expenditure over the previous four years.

“Continued growth in the program will improve access to culturally appropriate, comprehensive primary health care for Indigenous Australians and address areas of critical need through targeted investments to close the gap,” Minister Wyatt said.

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ⁱ Updated 6/7/17 to include reference to Central Australian Affordable Housing.