



Better Renal Services Steering Committee

Meeting 8 Communique – 25 September 2025

Introduction

The Better Renal Services Steering Committee (the Committee) provides advice on the implementation of the Better Renal Services for First Nations Peoples Measure (Better Renal Services measure). The 2022-23 Budget allocated \$73.2 million to fund 30 four-chair dialysis units, including workforce accommodation where required, to provide dialysis on Country to First Nations people with end-stage kidney disease.

Summary of discussion

The Co-Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed Members to Meeting 8.

The Hon Rebecca White MP, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, Assistant Minister for Women, attended the meeting and reaffirmed the Government's commitment to deliver 30 dialysis units in remote First Nations communities. Assistant Minister White invited members to provide their views on the significance of the Better Renal Services Measure and raise any issues within the renal sector.

Members of the Committee raised issues with Assistant Minister White including:

- Delivery challenges for the dialysis units, particularly due to increased building costs, licencing and land tenure complexities, sacred site clearances, staffing and workforce shortages.
- Funding sustainability relating to the current Medicare item for dialysis not covering all operational costs, resulting in a funding gap bridged through government, state and territory contributions, and fundraising efforts.
- The importance of early intervention, secondary prevention, and broader community health initiatives such as diabetes management, lifestyle support, and improved living conditions.
- Long-term sustainability of dialysis units, including the need for coordinated partnerships among the Commonwealth, states and territories, and the community-controlled sector.
- Advocacy for wraparound services and an integrated model of care to ensure holistic patient support beyond dialysis treatment.

Members proposed an evaluation of existing sites, focusing on sustainability, clinical governance, community impact, and effectiveness, with future investments guided by its findings.

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing provided updates on the progress of existing projects, Better Renal Services Measure funding and MBS item 13105 expansion.

Outcomes

- Members had the opportunity to raise issues regarding First Nations renal services directly with Assistant Minister White.
- Assistant Minister White asked members to provide their advice and recommendations to inform government decision making about fulfilling the election commitment.

Next Meeting

An extraordinary Steering Committee meeting will be held on 3 November 2025 to finalise advice to Assistant Minister White.