

Indigenous voices to be heard at Darwin kidney conference

5 September 2017

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with end-stage kidney disease from across northern and central Australia will be sharing their stories at an upcoming kidney conference in the hope of effecting change.

Participants will be speaking about the challenges of dialysis treatment and how it has affected them and their communities, and propose better, more collaborative ways forward in working with health care providers and policymakers.

“Indigenous health organisations in rural and remote Australia have been calling for more responsive treatment closer to home for kidney patients for more than two decades,” local organising committee conference co-chair, Dr Paul Lawton, said.

“The Indigenous Patients’ Voices Symposium is a response to this call, and will provide an unprecedented opportunity for patients and their carers to discuss how we can come up with constructive and novel solutions to their pressing needs.”

The symposium, to be held on Wednesday, 6 September 2017, is part of the 2017 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology (ANZSN) in Darwin.

Dr Lawton, a kidney specialist and senior research fellow at Menzies School of Health Research, said Indigenous Australians were at least six times more likely to need treatment for end-stage kidney disease compared to non-Indigenous Australians.

“If we don’t engage with Indigenous patients to hear their thoughts and suggested solutions, their pressing need for complex care will continue to be overlooked and their voices will remain unheard,” Dr Lawton said.

The Indigenous Patients’ Voices Symposium is supported by Astellas Transplant and Kidney Health Australia.

The ANZSN Annual Scientific Meeting will take place from 4 to 6 September 2017 at the Darwin Convention Centre.

For more information about the ANZSN conference, visit www.anzsnasm.com

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies School of Health Research is one of Australia’s leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. Menzies has a history of over 30 years of scientific discovery and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, joining with partners across the Asia-Pacific as well as Indigenous communities across northern and

central Australia. Menzies collaborates to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.

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Kidney Health Australia

Kidney Health Australia, formerly the Australian Kidney Foundation, is a national health care charity with a vision 'to save and improve the lives of Australians affected by kidney disease'. As the national peak body, Kidney Health Australia promotes good kidney health through delivery of programs in education, advocacy, research and support.