Minister Calls on SA and WA to Address Renal Dialysis

Minister for Health Kon Vatskalis has called for immediate action from Western Australian and South Australian Health Ministers to urgently address and expand renal dialysis services and infrastructure in Central Australia to cater for interstate renal patients.

Mr Vatskalis said the Renal Dialysis Unit in Alice Springs has seen an increase in Territory patients requiring dialysis to 198, and is at capacity. This includes 30 patients from WA and SA.

“The growing demand on renal services with WA and SA patients needing dialysis is far exceeding the NT’s current capacity - I am now asking my Health counterparts to come to the table to meet their obligations to their patients’ clinical, social and support needs,” Mr Vatskalis said.

Because of this increased demand, an agreement reached earlier this year saw all new interstate patients being referred to their originating state for assessment and ongoing treatment.

“The NT Government has not banned the treatment of interstate renal patients, however we are at full capacity and must treat Territorians first and foremost,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“I do understand that residents of Central Australia region identify Alice Springs as their cultural service centre, so I am calling on health officials in WA and SA to provide the resources necessary for the NT to expand its infrastructure and services to cater for their patients.

“I have written to my interstate counterparts and I am requesting a meeting with them at this week’s Australian Health Ministers Conference in Adelaide.”

Mr Vatskalis said the Federal Government announced last week the provision of two additional renal dialysis stations, and added that construction of the NT Government funded 15 station dialysis renal unit would be complete next year.

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