Commitment to Renal Dialysis on World Kidney Day

The NT Government today reaffirmed its commitment to continue its record investment in the renal health of Territorians on World Kidney Day.

“The Henderson Labor Government has invested record amounts into renal health since coming to Government – this year we are investing more than $25 million alone. This compares to $10 million that was available for renal services in 2001,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“And we are seeing the results of this massive increase with survival rates for Territorians on dialysis now equal to national rates – just 20 years ago the NT mortality rate was 66% above the national average.”

Mr Vatskalis said a new $16.7 million, 12-station dialysis renal unit in Alice Springs is due to open in May. This will provide dialysis for an additional 48 patients. The facility will provide Central Australian residents with greater access to life-saving renal dialysis services.

Work has also begun on expanding the Tennant Creek Dialysis Unit by an additional 8 stations.

And late last year, as an interim measure, the Federal Government provided for a temporary relocatable facility that can cater for two dialysis chairs, treating about eight patients a week. This will commence operation within the next month.

Mr Vatskalis said the NT Government is currently negotiating a tri-state agreement with WA and SA for treatment and support of patients within the Central Australian region.

“There continues to be a high demand for renal services in Central Australia - there are currently 30 patients from WA and SA receiving treatment in Alice Springs. The NT Government has put in several measures and invested significant money to provide extra capacity,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“I want to see Alice Springs as the regional centre for treatment of renal dialysis, and the agreement that is currently being negotiated will cover long-term plans for community-based dialysis and primary care models to reduce the number of people who will eventually require dialysis.

“This is the model that has been proven to work extremely well in the NT – and we are encouraging Western Australia and South Australia to work in co-operation with the NT on this model as part of the tri-state Agreement.”

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