Health Minister Kon Vatskalis joined iconic Australian entertainer Jimmy Little in launching an important education tool designed to educate Territorians living in Aboriginal communities about renal disease.

The launch was also be attended by members of the Baxter Healthcare team including Brian Graham and Nathaniel Peek.

Mr Vatskalis said the resources – a DVD about Peritoneal Dialysis and a software program entitled Marvin Kidney Stories – aims to increase awareness about the causes of renal disease and the options for treatment.

“The Government has already invested significant additional money into expanding services available for those suffering kidney disease and renal failure in the Territory – this year investing over $25 million alone in addressing kidney disease in the Territory,” he said.

“In the Territory, it’s important that information about health issues such as renal disease are presented in a way that is sensitive to language and culture, and the resources launched today certainly achieve this.

“The NT Renal Education Resources will better equip health professionals to assist clients to understand what renal disease is, and to inform them about the different treatment options available.”

Mr Vatskalis said while demand for dialysis treatment is increasing in the Northern Territory, the uptake of peritoneal dialysis – which allows people to be treated wherever they are – is low. He said the NT Renal Education Resources were partly funded by the NT Department of Health and Families (DHF) and were developed in collaboration with both Jimmy Little Enterprises and Baxter Healthcare.

The DVD Let the Medicine Come to You stars Mr Little and features a song jointly developed by DHF and JLE and performed by the famed entertainer. The purpose of the DVD is to encourage the uptake of peritoneal dialysis by people in communities.

Marvin Kidney Stories is a series of animated stories developed by Baxter Health Care with support from DHF. The interactive software program allows the user to create their own story using different characters, and all stories have an underlying message about Renal Disease and peritoneal dialysis.

“These resources will correct any misconceptions about peritoneal dialysis and provide detailed information about how this method of dialysis works,” Mr Vatskalis said.

Jimmy Little today spoke with clients receiving treatment at the Nightcliff DHF Renal Unit, and shared his personal experience with renal disease and peritoneal dialysis.

Contact: Maria Billias 0401 119 746