



# Media Release

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## Palliative care important for kidney patients

World Kidney Day reminds us of the important role of palliative care in supporting end stage kidney disease patients, says Palliative Care Australia CEO Liz Callaghan.

“Patients may be missing out on palliative care because they do not understand the disease’s life limiting nature. We want all Australians to be accessing palliative care when they need it, particularly to help them with pain and symptom management.

“It is important we give patients the information they need to make choices about the kind of care they want and ensure it is delivered.”

The national peak body, Palliative Care Australia has called for funding to develop an information portal for patients in conjunction with Kidney Health Australia in its Federal Budget submission.

“There are a significant number of Australians who are suffering and dying with a chronic disease, or multiple co-morbidities who are not directed to palliative care. We need to advocate for services to be provided across the spectrum of illnesses.

“Those numbers increase with disadvantage – social, economic, geographic remoteness – all impact access to palliative care. It isn’t fair.”

Ms Callaghan said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to bear the brunt of inequalities in Australia’s health care system.

“Australian World Kidney Day has a specific focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Despite representing less than 2.5 percent of Australia’s population they account for about 9 percent of people starting kidney replacement therapy each year.

“Data released last year shows 90 percent of Indigenous Australians with signs of chronic kidney disease are not aware they have it. We can and we should work to improve prevention and health outcomes for this population,” Ms Callaghan said.

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