

6 March 2018

## Awareness key to good Kidney Health

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is joining Kidney Health Australia in raising awareness about kidney related disease during Kidney Health Week (March 5-11).

Kidney related disease kills more Australians each year than breast cancer, prostate cancer and road accidents combined, yet awareness remains low.

ISLHD Renal Physician Dr Jane Holt said one in three people living in Australia is at increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease.

“Kidneys are extremely important to a person’s overall health. Just like the heart, brain, or lungs they are vital to good health and if they shut down, your body shuts down,” Dr Holt said.

“Every day 53 people living in Australia die with kidney-related illness,” she said.

Australians at risk of developing chronic kidney disease include those who have diabetes, high blood pressure, established cardiovascular problems such as heart failure or heart attack, have had a previous stroke, a family history of kidney failure, are obese with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher, smoke, have a history of acute kidney injury, are 60 plus years old or are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

Kidney Health Australia Interim CEO Lisa Murphy urged people to take Kidney Health Australia’s ‘Are you the 1 in 3?’ test to learn if they are at increased risk of developing kidney disease.

“We’ve created a simple online test to help people understand their risk factors. Because 90 per cent of kidney function can be lost without experiencing any symptoms, it’s important to see if you’re one of the one in three people at increased risk – and if so, to get a kidney check by your GP.

“If caught early, chronic kidney disease is very treatable and in some cases can even be reversed entirely. Our message this Kidney Health Week is don’t wait until you feel sick. Take our online test and if you are high-risk, get your kidneys checked,” she said.

To take Kidney Health Australia’s ‘Are you the 1 in 3?’ test to find out if you are at an increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease, and for more information on Kidney Health Week visit [www.kidney.org.au](http://www.kidney.org.au)

### **Kidney Health Week Information Stall**

The Renal Service, supported by mascot, ‘Billy the *Kidney*’, will host an information and blood pressure stand at the University of Wollongong at the Innovation Campus on Thursday, 8 March from 11am to 2pm.

**Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District**

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## **Kidney Health Bus**

The Big Red Kidney Bus, a mobile dialysis unit which allows people living with kidney disease to go on holiday has arrived in Kiama.

The bus is located at the Big4 Easts Holiday Park, Kiama, until March 24, offering families and individuals from around Australia the opportunity to have what is possibly their first holiday since starting dialysis treatment.