

NIKTT Gathering 2025

Media Release

For Immediate release

The Gathering: a unique and powerful conversation to transform kidney care

Kurna Yarta, 12 Feb 2025 – More than 120 people from across Australia will come together on 18-20 February 2025 for the second National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT) *Gathering*, a landmark event focused on improving access to kidney transplantation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

What makes the *Gathering* unique is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, carers, and Community members will sit and speak alongside non-Indigenous nephrologists, heads of renal units, and health system leaders. Together, they will discuss how to create better pathways to transplantation and equitable care—ensuring that decisions about kidney health are shaped by the people most affected.

"This is about making sure people with lived experience of kidney disease are at the centre of the conversation, not just as voices in the room, but as equal contributors in shaping solutions," said Kelli Owen, a Kurna, Narungga, and Ngarrindjeri woman, the NIKTT's National Community Engagement Coordinator, and a kidney transplant recipient herself.



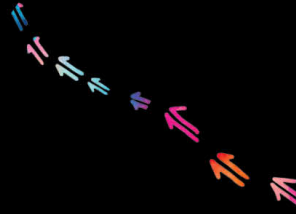
Attendees at the first NIKTT Gathering in 2022

More than half of the attendees are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, carers, and clinicians who are coming from all corners of the country – from Badu Island and Kalkarindji to Kununurra and Wilcannia. They bring lived experience and leadership to the forefront of discussions on kidney health and transplantation equity. Doubling in size since its first iteration, the *Gathering* has evolved to include a dedicated "mob-only" day, providing a culturally safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendees to connect, share, and lead discussions.

Hosted at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), the *Gathering* will focus on advancing the future of transplantation equity, honouring the stories that shape NIKTT's work, and laying the groundwork for the next phase of this important journey.

For the second time, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dialysis patients from remote and regional communities will be supported to attend, with dialysis provided throughout the event using the Rural Support Service (RSS) mobile dialysis truck which will be parked at Kanggawodli, a culturally safe accommodation and support service for Aboriginal patients. The RSS truck will ensure that those undergoing treatment can participate fully in the *Gathering* while continuing their care. Central





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Adelaide Local Health Network are also supporting the event by dialysing two interstate patients who usually would dialyse in their homes at the Hampstead Home Dialysis Unit.



RSS Mobile Dialysis Truck



Professor Stephen McDonald, NIKTT Co-Chair, seated inside the mobile dialysis truck

Kidney disease disproportionately affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who are far more likely to experience end-stage kidney disease yet face significant barriers to transplantation.

The *Gathering* will bring together patients at every stage of the kidney journey—those with a transplant, those waiting for a transplant, those on dialysis, people in pre-dialysis stages, paediatric kidney patients, and their families—alongside community leaders, health professionals, and policymakers.

"This is about making sure care is done *with* Community, not *to* Community," said Kelli. "When we come together, we share experiences, we share solutions, and we share a vision for going forward. We're connecting strong links across the country so that we're a united voice in addressing the government and showing what we're living with every day of our lives."



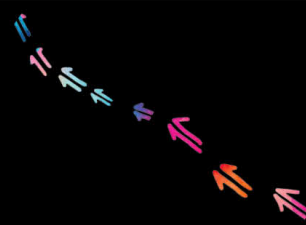
Kelli Owen leading conversations at the last NIKTT Gathering in 2022

Hosted by the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT), the *Gathering* will provide a platform for knowledge sharing, storytelling, and collaborative action to ensure better kidney health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For media inquiries, interviews, or more information, please contact:

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Event Details

When: 18 February 2025 to 20 February 2025

Where: SAHMRI, Adelaide, South Australia

More information: <https://www.niktt.com.au/gathering2025>

Information booklet: heyzine.com/flip-book/GatheringInformationBooklet

About the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce

The National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT) is a collaborative network of clinicians, patients, and Community advocates from across Australia. It was established to enhance access to life-saving kidney transplants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. By advocating for change, shaping policy, and fostering collaboration, the NIKTT aims to close the gap in kidney health outcomes and guarantee fair access to transplantation services.

Find out more: www.niktt.com.au

