

Media Release – New review says addressing social determinants of health is key to preventing Aboriginal kidney disease

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The Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet has produced an updated *Review of kidney health among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*. Kidney disease is a serious health concern for people living in Australia with one in three adult Australians at an increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease (CKD). Australians diagnosed with CKD regularly suffer poor health outcomes and a compromised quality of life. CKD can be associated with other chronic diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience an increased burden of kidney disease, particularly those living in remote communities <https://healthinfo.net.ecu.edu.au/learn/health-facts/reviews-knowledge-exchange-products/>

HealthInfoNet Director Neil Drew says, “The purpose of this review is to provide a comprehensive synthesis of key information on kidney health among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia and provide evidence to assist in the development and delivery of policies, strategies and programs”.

Co-author Janet Kelly says “The needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kidney patients have been well established through many studies and community consultations. The focus is now shifting to implement and evaluate initiatives that address identified barriers and build on strengths and enablers. There is increasing recognition of the need to prevent people becoming ill with CKD particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people given the socioeconomic challenges that exist, and the need to address the social determinants of health and risk factors”.

The review highlights the increasing body of work addressing institutional and systemic racism in the health system to achieve health equity. The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023 includes a vision for the Australian health system to be “free of racism and inequality and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to health services that are effective, high quality, appropriate and affordable”. The Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector have been actively addressing the social determinants of health for their communities and are well placed to continue and expand this work.

The review is accompanied by:

A factsheet <https://healthinfo.net.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/publications/41366/> a plain language summary <https://healthinfo.net.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/publications/41279/> a recorded webinar <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0te-9r-GZrs&feature=youtu.be> and a short video <https://healthinfo.net.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/publications/41433/>

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About the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet: The HealthInfoNet is a comprehensive web resource that informs practice and policy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander health by making up to date research and other knowledge readily accessible via any platform. For over 23 years, in the area of knowledge exchange with a population health focus, the HealthInfoNet makes research and other information freely available to deliver immediate, practical utility for practitioners and policy-makers, enabling them to make decisions based on the best available evidence. www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au