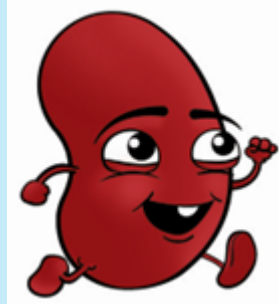


OKS newsletter



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Treasurer: Karen Macleod Email: karen@oks.nz 021 280 0552
Secretary: Philippa Pringle Email: pringlephilippa@gmail.com 021 987 887
Otago Kidney Society Email: info@oks.nz

Facebook page link [Otago Kidney Whānau | Facebook](#)



Welcome to the Otago Kidney Society (OKS) Autumn 2026 newsletter

Message from the Committee

Welcome to 2026, I hope you managed to have a break and are now enjoying the better weather than we had over the Christmas period.

We have had our first committee meeting of the year and are ready for the year ahead. We were pleased to announce we purchased a the new ice machine for the Dialysis Unit for patients). Pictures below show the ice machine and a patient enjoying ice from the machine.



Some important dates coming up, Tuesday, 10th March OKS AGM (details further down), Thursday 12th March World Kidney Day (WKD), again details further down. Sunday 28th March our first lunch of the year at Moeraki (details further down). The Organ Donation NZ Thanksgiving Service is in Dunedin this year on 24th May, details to follow when we know more.

We have had some wonderful news with Katherine Rich, Jock Allison's daughter agreeing to be our patron we look forward to working with her and introducing her to our members.

Thanks to all those members who put a submission in supporting Maria in her role, it is still under review so fingers crossed.

Many thanks, OKS Committee

AGM

Our AGM is on the 10th March, at 5.30pm, in the Seminar Room on the 3rd floor, Dunedin Public Hospital. Instead of turning left to the Dialysis Room turn right and second door on the right.

Save the date

Organ Donation NZ Thanksgiving Service here in Dunedin on Sunday 24th of May.

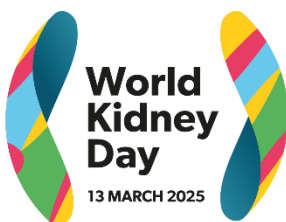
World Kidney Day

We are thrilled to announce Kidney Health NZ (KHNZ) will be joining us in the Wall Street Mall on World Kidney Day, 12th March between 10.00am and 3.00pm. This year as well as blood pressure testing we will in conjunction with KHNZ be doing Kidney function tests. We would love to see you there.



ARE YOUR KIDNEYS OK

Detect early, protect kidney health



#WorldKidneyDay
#AreYourKidneysOK
worldkidneyday.org

World Kidney Day is a joint initiative of



© World Kidney Day 2006 - 2025

Autumn lunch details



Otago Kidney Society

Autumn Lunch

Sunday, 29th March at 12 midday



at

The Moeraki Tavern, 144 Haven Street, Moeraki

Varied Lunch, Pizza & Bar Menus

(gf & veg. options available)

OKS will subsidise each person's meal by \$10

RSVP by Tuesday, 24th March

to Liz Edwards email: lb_edwards@extra.co.nz

mob: 0210476187



Welcome to Katherine Rich our OKS Patron

Sa



Katherine Rich (née Allison, born 16 December 1967) served as a member of the [New Zealand House of Representatives](#) for the [National Party](#) from 1999 to 2008. She was chief executive of the New Zealand Food & Grocery Council, an industry lobby group, from 2009 to 2022, and in 2024 she was appointed chief executive of BusinessNZ.

The role of a patron is essentially as a Number 1 supporter and champion for the club's long-term success.

My first meeting with Katherine was so exciting, Katherine was thrilled to be asked and she had plenty of ideas about what she could do to help us and she is looking forward to meeting you all.

Christchurch Kidney Society Update

Firstly on behalf of the OKS I have thanked the CKS for donating the wonderful black bags that are given out to new patients with their gift packs when they first become a patient of the Dialysis Unit and to put their notebooks etc in when attending treatments.

The new dialysis treatment van is up and running and people can contact us directly if interested in booking it and our old campervan is currently with Jayco Canterbury and if there is any interest in purchasing it, people contact Peter on 027 622 9378 or make an enquiry with Jayco Canterbury.

Many thanks
Jo

CHRISTCHURCH KIDNEY SOCIETY INC.
Serving our renal community for over 45 years
1/10 Yukon Place, Hornby, Christchurch 8042
Ph: 03 341 0906 or 021 2860 309

Sun Safety After Summer

Protecting Your Skin After Transplant

Dr Anne Collins

Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon
Medical Director, The Surgery Dunedin
Level 1B / 70 Stuart Street, Dunedin Central
www.drannecollins.co.nz

As we move out of summer and into the cooler months, it is very easy to relax our sun habits. The days feel shorter, the heat less intense, and the urgency fades.

However, in New Zealand, ultraviolet (UV) radiation remains strong enough to cause skin damage well beyond the height of summer. For kidney transplant recipients, this matters even more.

Skin cancer in New Zealand

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Each year approximately 90,000 non-melanoma skin cancers (basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas) and 2,800 melanomas are diagnosed nationally.

Our risk is higher because:

- UV radiation here is around 40% stronger than at similar northern hemisphere latitudes
- The ozone layer thins seasonally
- We have an outdoor lifestyle
- Many of us have fair skin with less natural UV protection



Transplant and Skin Cancer Risk

Immunosuppressive medications, essential to protect your transplanted kidney, also reduce the body's ability to repair UV-related DNA damage and to recognise early cancer cells.

As a result, transplant recipients have:

- Around a 10-fold increased risk of basal cell carcinoma
- Up to a 250-fold increased risk of squamous cell carcinoma

In transplant recipients, squamous cell carcinomas in particular can behave more aggressively and may spread earlier than in the general population.

That is why prevention and early detection are so important.

What should you look out for?

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)

- A pearly or pink bump
- A red or brown patch
- A spot with raised edges
- May bleed, itch, or fail to heal

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)

- Red, scaly patches
- A crusted or scabby area
- A thickened or rough spot
- May bleed, itch, or fail to heal

Melanoma

- A mole that looks different from others (the ugly duckling)
- An uneven or irregular shape
- Irregular or blurred borders
- Uneven or changing colour
- A spot that is growing, itching, bleeding, or changing over time

If something is new, changing, bleeding, painful, or simply does not look right, have it checked promptly.

Trust your instincts.



Not all sunscreens are equal

Recent independent testing in Australasia has raised concerns that some sunscreen products did not meet their labelled SPF claims.

In New Zealand, sunscreens must comply with the Australian/New Zealand sunscreen standard. However, independent Consumer NZ testing has previously shown variation between products.

Practical advice:

- Choose SPF50+ broad-spectrum products
- Check expiry dates
- Apply generously
- Reapply regularly

The best sunscreen is the one you will use consistently, but quality matters.

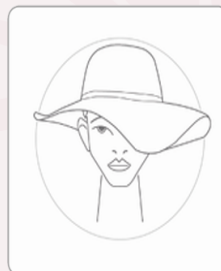


MARCH 2026

Sun protection is year round

UV exposure remains significant:

- In the mountains
- Around water
- On reflective surfaces like snow
- Even on cooler or cloudy days
- Especially those at high risk such as transplant recipients



Slip, Slop, Slap, Wrap

- Slip on protective clothing
- Slop on broad-spectrum SPF50+ sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours
- Slap on a wide-brimmed hat
- Wrap on UV-protective sunglasses



Know the skin you're in

Checking your skin once a month can help you detect changes early, when treatment is simplest and most effective.

- Use mirrors to check hard-to-see areas
- Ask a partner or family member for help
- Take photos to monitor any changes

Early detection significantly improves outcomes.

Professional skin checks

Kidney transplant recipients should have regular full-body skin examinations, at least annually, and often more frequently if there is a history of previous skin cancers.

Skin checks can be arranged:

- Through your GP
- With a doctor in the community who has a special interest in skin cancer
- Or at The Surgery, where comprehensive full-body skin assessments are available

If you notice something new or changing, do not wait for your annual check, arrange a review promptly.

Final thoughts

Many of you have navigated extraordinary medical journeys. Protecting your skin is another important step in protecting your long-term health.

Sun damage accumulates over time. Every episode of sunburn increases future risk so it is never too late to adopt safer habits.

Prevention. Vigilance. Early detection.

These three simple steps save lives.





A Message from Kath Eastwood – CEO, Auckland District Kidney Society

Kia ora koutou,

I'm excited to share that the Kidney Society will be launching our *virtual education sessions* in late September! These interactive sessions are designed to give you clear, practical, and empowering information to help you better understand chronic kidney disease (CKD) and make confident, informed choices about your care and treatment.

These 50-60 min online sessions are open to any adult in Aotearoa New Zealand living with CKD, whether you've just been diagnosed or have been managing your condition for some time. We also warmly welcome your whānau to join in, as we know how important support networks are on this journey.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to check out our [YouTube channel](#), where we've uploaded lots of helpful videos focused on improving your physical health and wellbeing. We also regularly share updates, tips, and resources on our [Facebook page](#), so come follow us there too!

At the Auckland District Kidney Society, we are all too aware of the inequities that exist in health and the post code lottery many people with kidney disease and their families face. We're on a mission to change that and even though many of our staff are based in Auckland, we are working to make more services available nationwide, particularly in the digital space. Together with the Otago Kidney Society, we are here to help you live your best life with kidney disease. If there's anything we can do to support you or your whānau, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Ngā mihi nui,
Kath Eastwood

Message from the NZ Transplant Games Team Manager

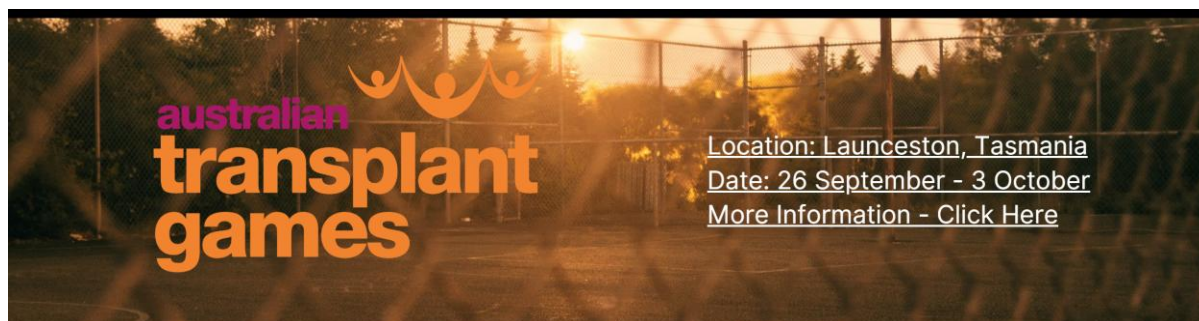
After great participation at last year's Dresden games we are looking forward to the upcoming Australian games which have recently been announced to be in Launceston, Tasmania in September/October this year!

We are committed to sending a NZ team, and would love to have as many of you that can attend! For those that haven't been to the Australian Games before or in fact any games, these are an amazing celebration of the gift of life and all about participation and fun. You don't need to be an expert in anything, it is all about having fun, and encouraging others. There are events for transplant recipients, donors and supporters alike and suited for all abilities and fitness levels. You can enter as many events as you like, one day you could be ten-pin bowling, then playing darts at night, or walking and throwing a ball the next day at the athletics track, as well as your normal events. You could even be a whiz at scrabble or sudoku!

We are keen to get an understanding of who is interested initially, and get the team vibe going on a group whatsapp chat. We will set up a webinar shortly to go through information like registratoin (which opens in March) accommodaiton, uniform etc.

What I need from you is an email from you to jessica.avanslooter@gmail.com to say you are interested, and then your phone number if you want to be in the whatsapp group. I will keep the information flow going about what to expect going forward.

Can't wait to hear back!



A message from our Charge Nurse Manager Southern Dialysis Service Nic Holborow



Te Waka Whakaora Takihi Opens in Invercargill

We are thrilled to announce that our newest dialysis unit, Te Waka Whakaora Takihi, has officially opened in Invercargill. This special name was gifted to us by Waihopai Rūnaka, and we are extremely grateful for their generosity and support. The opening of this unit is a significant and heartening step forward for our Southland community and for our service.

The establishment of Te Waka Whakaora Takihi means several patients who have been residing in Dunedin for haemodialysis can now return home. It also expands our ability to support stable acutes, respite care, holiday dialysis, and training closer to where people live. This is exactly the kind of patient-centred

progress we strive for, and it's wonderful to see it become a reality.

To support the new service, we have welcomed three additional Registered Nurses and an Associate Charge Nurse Manager, who will provide senior clinical and operational oversight. Their expertise and enthusiasm have already made a strong impression.

Activity Across the Region

- Dunedin has continued to be busy, but the team has still been able to facilitate respite, training and support several holiday patients- as well as take holidays themselves!**
- Dunstan Satellite Unit has been well utilised over summer. A reminder to everyone using this space: please ensure you leave it even better than you found it. It is a shared environment, and being mindful of this helps us maintain a positive experience for all. If any issues arise, please reach out to the team in Dunedin so we can address them promptly.**

This has been a period of growth, collaboration, and genuine impact for patients and whānau. Thank you to everyone involved in making this possible.

Kidney Health

New Zealand Tākihi Hauora Aotearoa

Kia ora koutou,

Many thanks to Natalie and the Otago Kidney Society for the hard work they do, and for asking me to contribute.

Kidney Health New Zealand is here to support people living with kidney disease, their whānau, and carers. We offer free, easy-to-understand kidney health information, and a range of refreshed resources that can be viewed online or ordered in hard copy at no cost through our website here: <https://www.kidney.health.nz/patient-support/resources>

We also run a national phone line at 0800 KIDNEY (0800 543 639), staffed by renal nurses and available Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm. This is a free service where you can ask questions, get advice, or talk through concerns with someone who understands kidney disease and the health system.

In March, we will be launching a public health campaign as part of National Kidney Month, focused on kidney health testing, early detection, and prevention. The campaign will aim to help people better understand their risk factors, encourage timely testing, and promote simple steps that can protect kidney health. We hope this campaign will support more people to identify kidney disease earlier and access the care and support they need.

If you'd like to stay up to date with our resources, services, and community activity, you can follow Kidney Health New Zealand on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn, or visit our website for more information. I'm always eager to collaborate and would be very happy to hear from you directly at madi.keay@kidney.health.nz if you have any suggestions on how Kidney Health NZ can best support the needs of the Otago region.

Ngā mihi nui,

Madi Keay,

General Manager

Kidney Health New Zealand



Australasian Kidney Trials Network (AKTN)

Below highlights some of the trials being carried out by AKTN if you would like to know more please don't hesitate to contact me (Natalie), especially if you are keen to take an active role in being a consumer advisor. My role with AKTN is as a member of the Consumer Advisory Board, but I am also a consumer advisor on some of the trials, eg M-Fit, but also from time to time the various trials will ask the Consumer Board for advice.



Australasian Kidney Trials Network

Trial Highlights of 2025

PHOSPHATE



PHOSPHATE is a pragmatic international collaboration addressing a major evidence gap in kidney failure care for adults on dialysis. Despite guideline recommendations to lower phosphate, current evidence is low quality, and phosphate-lowering medications add pill burden, side effects, and cost — without proven benefit for survival or quality of life. This trial aims to determine whether lowering serum phosphate improves patient-centred outcomes.

- The Global Steering Committee is chaired by Prof David Johnson.
- Follow-up was completed for Australian participants in 2025 after exceeding the Australian recruitment target in 2024. New Zealand participants also completed follow-up.
- International sites continue recruitment.
- Second interim analysis & protocol paper due in 2026.



Trial Highlights of 2025

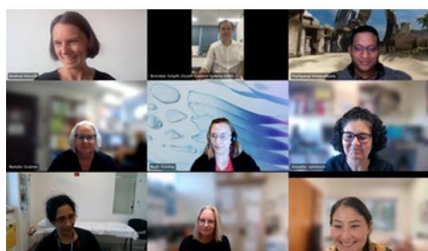


PROF PETER KERR PRESENTING AT THE ANZSN CONGRESS



INCH-HD is studying whether incremental dialysis will improve health outcomes for haemodialysis patients compared to conventional dialysis. The primary outcome is a quality-of-life questionnaire completed at 6 months, as it was identified as an important aspect during consumer consultation. The trial is an international multi-centre trial involving Australia and Canada, led by A/Prof Andrea Viecelli, Prof Peter Kerr, Prof David Johnson and Prof Charmaine Lok.

- All countries are activated and recruiting.
- 100% of Australian recruiting sites are activated.
- 9 month extension approved by MRFF.
- The first participants completed the study in November 2024.

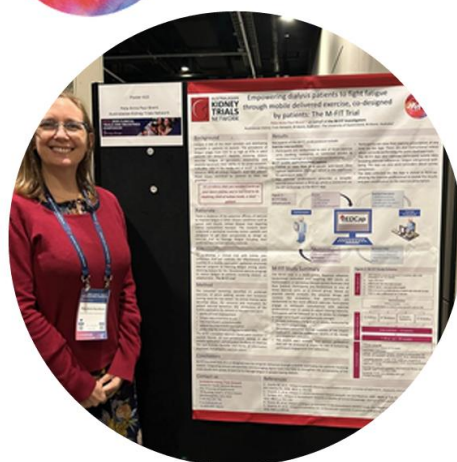


INCH-HD INVESTIGATOR MEETING



Australasian Kidney Trials Network

Trial Highlights of 2025



PETA-ANNE PAUL-BRENT, ACTA CONFERENCE

M-FIT opened to recruitment in 2024 and expanded to multiple sites across Australia in 2025. This innovative trial is AKTN's first to deliver a bespoke mobile app for personalised exercise prescriptions, co-designed with consumers to ensure relevance and usability. The trial features an active Consumer Advisory Board, providing input into study design, exercise programs, app development and testing. Led by Prof Allison Jaure, M-FIT is an adaptive randomised trial addressing a patient prioritised outcome — fatigue in dialysis. Peta-Anne Paul-Brent presented a poster, titled “M-FIT: Empowering dialysis patients to fight fatigue through mobile-delivered exercise, co-designed by patients”, at the ACTA Conference, highlighting its strong consumer engagement and novel approach.