

## “Improving Aboriginal Kidney Care Together”

### **Authors:**

### **Abstract:**

### **Introduction:**

The AKtion project brings together Aboriginal kidney patients and family members, health professionals, health services, academics and researchers to improve kidney care in South Australia. It aims to identify and respond to the needs of Aboriginal kidney patients and their families.

### **Methods**

This MRFF Health Translation SA project is guided by the aKtion Reference Group comprising Aboriginal kidney patients and carers who provide leadership and governance. Community consultations, focus groups and Aboriginal kidney patient journey mapping and implementation working groups have been undertaken in Adelaide, Port Augusta and Ceduna.

### **Results**

A strong and effective aKtion Reference Group is providing guidance to the project and renal services, and initiating one to one and collaborative peer support activities. The well attended community consultations are informing local, state and national kidney services and clinical guidelines. A new approach to mapping kidney journeys is being developed and will be incorporated into clinical practice. Responsive strategies including 1:1 peer support during dialysis and Kidney Yarning Gatherings are being piloted. A major stakeholder workshop was held and focused on access, transport and accommodation issues, resulting in short, medium and long term strategies being identified. These are now being addressed through small working groups.

### **Conclusion**

Aboriginal kidney patients and their families, and individual clinicians, have been advocating for changes for some time, but with little success. This project has been a catalyst. The process of bringing together experienced patient and their family members, health practitioners, researchers, educators and support services has enabled complex care issues to be effectively highlighted and responsive strategies created. It is not possible to change deep systems issues immediately, but by working together we can ensure that Aboriginal people can live well on dialysis, rather than just survive.