

Monday September 4

## TRANSFORMATION OF KIDNEY HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA INTENSIFIES AS BRENDAN MURPHY JOINS PEAK BODY BOARD



**Kidney Health Australia welcomes Professor Brendan Murphy AC to the Board of the national peak body.**

Kidney Health Australia Chair, **Professor Carol Pollock**, welcomed the new appointment to the Kidney Health Australia Board.

Professor Brendan Murphy AC has joined the Board of Kidney Health Australia after recently retiring from his position as Secretary of the **Department of Health and Aged Care** which he held from July 2020. Prior to his appointment as Secretary, Professor Murphy was the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the Australian Government and, previously, the CEO of Austin Health in Victoria.

Professor Murphy is:

- a Professorial Associate with the title of Professor at the University of Melbourne
- an Adjunct Professor at Monash University and at the Australian National University
- a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (FAAHMS)
- a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Physicians (FRACP)
- a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD).

He was formerly director of Nephrology at St Vincent's Health and sat on the boards of the Centenary Institute, Health Workforce Australia, the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute and the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre. He is also a former president of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology.

“Professor Murphy is a highly respected professional who comes with a diverse range of experience across matters relating to kidney disease. They will play a pivotal role in guiding strategy and transforming the kidney health landscape,” said Professor Pollock.

“There’s never been a better time to join the fight for kidney health in Australia. We’re on the verge of a major transformation as new treatments are introduced, new programs are developed to support people living with kidney disease, and solid evidence emerges outlining how early detection saves lives and money.”

As one of Australia’s biggest killers, kidney disease is a national emergency, contributing to 1 in 9 deaths and 1 in 6 hospitalisations. It can be a debilitating freedom-robbing disease, severely impacting the individual, their families and the healthcare system.

“Now is the time for the nation to focus on this deadly disease. Through targeted screening, early diagnosis and proactive treatment we can turn the situation around. A renewed drive will radically change outcomes for patients, the healthcare system, and the economy.”

According to Kidney Health Australia’s recently released **Deloitte Economics Access Report**, kidney disease costs the Australian economy \$9.9 billion each year, including \$2.3 billion in direct costs to the health system. Importantly, every \$1 invested in early detection of chronic kidney disease, can save \$45 in costs to the health system.

“We are excited to leverage Professor Murphy’s exceptional expertise and leadership to drive change. His profound knowledge and commitment to advancing kidney health for all Australians will undoubtedly contribute to the transformation of the whole kidney-ecosystem,” added Professor Pollock.

Kidney Health Australia CEO, **Chris Forbes** said: “We often hear from our community that kidney disease doesn’t get the same attention as other chronic conditions. With the guidance of the Kidney Health Australia Board, we can break some of these barriers and emerge even stronger for our community and for the 1.8 million Australians with signs of kidney disease who are yet to be diagnosed.”

Professor Murphy joins other esteemed Directors: Peter Haddad, AO, Rhonda Renwick OAM, Dr Steve Francis and Mr Lachy Haynes.

## KEY STATISTICS AROUND KIDNEY HEALTH

- Chronic kidney disease affects more than 2 million Australians – that’s almost one in every 10. This increases to 1 in 5 for First Nations Australians.
- 1.8 million Australians are unaware they have kidney disease.
- Early detection can result in 38,200 fewer deaths due to kidney failure and CVD-related events over the next 20 years and 237,324 fewer CVD hospitalisations.
- Around 66 Australians die per day with chronic kidney disease (more than breast and prostate cancer and road accidents).
- Chronic kidney disease contributes to 1 in 6 hospitalisations in Australia.
- Chronic kidney disease is an underlying cause in 12 per cent of all deaths in Australia.
- Chronic kidney disease costs Australia \$9.9 billion each year, including \$2.3 billion to our healthcare system – an unnecessary cost if we diagnose kidney disease earlier.
- For every dollar invested in targeted early detection of chronic kidney disease, \$45 in costs are saved in the health system.
- People can lose up to 90 per cent of their kidney function before symptoms appear. At this stage the damage is irreversible.

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**About Kidney Health Australia**

Kidney Health Australia is the recognised voice for kidney disease in Australia, striving to reduce the incidence of the disease in the community, and saving and improving the lives of those who are affected.

For 55 years, Kidney Health Australia has worked tirelessly to support people living with kidney disease, connect them and their families with vital information, programs and services; as well as advocating on their behalf for health initiatives that will improve their quality of life and health outcomes.

With 1.8 million Australians unaware they have signs of kidney disease, early detection continues to be a key driver for Kidney Health Australia, with a focus on awareness raising activities targeting those at risk, as well as educating and supporting Healthcare Professionals on earlier diagnosis, treatment and management of kidney disease.

Research into kidney disease also continues to be a key focus, with the organization working with the clinical and research community to support treatment improvements and innovations so that one day, every Australian can enjoy good kidney health.

To find out more visit [www.kidney.org.au](http://www.kidney.org.au)

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