Kidney Health
Tākihi Hauora Aotearoa

Kidney Health Newsletter 2026

Welcome to the first Kidney Health NZ Newsletter of 2026.

It's been a massive start to the year for Kidney Health NZ and we're so proud to share an update about all the things that have been going on.

Over the past few months we've been advocating to Government, offering free kidney health checks in the community and raising awareness about kidney disease at a national level with our 'Request a Test' campaign. Read about some of this awesome work in the sections below.

Please note that due to financial pressure, we will only be offering our newsletter in a digital format from now on.

We appreciate your understanding as we navigate this change.



Message from Board Chair

Kidney Health New Zealand continues its long-standing commitment to improving kidney health outcomes for all New Zealanders. This financial year has been one of growth, momentum, and increasing visibility for kidney health, alongside an important period of transition for the organisation and the Board.

As an organisation with more than four decades of service to the kidney community, we are proud of the difference our work continues to make. At the same time, we remain acutely aware that kidney disease is often silent, frequently undiagnosed until advanced stages, and disproportionately affects Māori, Pasifika and other high-risk communities.

Prevention, early detection, equity, and patient advocacy therefore remain central to everything we do.

I would like to recognise the retirement of Dave Shearer and John Kearns from the board, both of whom have dedicated significant time and energy to KHNZ over the past seven years. Dave ended his roles as Chair and Director in December 2025, while John concluded his tenure as a Director at the same time.

Additionally, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Peter Kelly, Jan Sedgwick, and Mark Lewis as new Directors to the Board in 2026. We appreciate the skills and expertise of the new directors bring to the board and the continued work of the existing board members.

Maree Munro
Board Chair





Kidney Awareness Month 2026 & Community Testing

We're incredibly proud of our efforts during Kidney Awareness Month this March, and we're excited to share that our campaign reached more than three million views across social media, website traffic, media coverage, and advertising - An outstanding result for the team.

One moment that we're particularly proud of was being able discuss dialysis awareness on a Seven Sharp segment alongside segments from Ross Taylor and David Letele/Buttabean Motivation (BBM), reaching thousands of viewers throughout Aotearoa.

Many thanks to all the hospitals, primary health organisations, general practices, universities, businesses, charities and individuals who supported our campaign.

We were privileged to kick off Kidney Awareness Month 2026 with a day of kidney health checks and health education at Parliament in Wellington.

It was an incredible privilege to not only speak at length with Hon. Simeon Brown, Minister of Health, about the ways that CKD impacts the health system, but also about the financial burden on the health system, and for taxpayers, as well as the health and socio-economic impact CKD has on individuals and families.
These moments give KHNZ a valuable opportunity to educate and advocate to members of parliament whose decisions may affect people living with chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Thank you to the team at Fale Pasifika and everyone who made this day possible, and for the support shown to Kidney Health NZ and our staff. The event let KHNZ connect with the Pasifika community, other health providers, and showcase our work.

Resources Available!

We have several free to order and access resources available on our website in English, Te Ao Māori, Fijian, Tongan, Samoan, Niuean, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan.

Access them here



News & Updates

Southland Dialysis Unit (Te Waka Whakaora Takihi) iPad Donation





Back in February, General Manager Madi Keay and Grant Coordinator Alyssa Harrignton had the privilege of attending the opening of the new dialysis unit in Southland - Te Waka Whakaora Takihi.

During the visit, Nic, the Charge Nurse Manager of Southern Renal expressed that patients on dialysis had no access to a TV or devices to help pass the time. For many, this made an already difficult experience even harder.

Alyssa reached out to One NZ in Invercargill, who generously stepped in through their Regional Community Fund to donate a brand-new iPad 11 along with an antimicrobial screen protector.

A massive thank you to Nic, Lucy, and Danielle from Southland Hospital, as well as Max and Mel from One NZ, for coming together to make this happen!

ANZSN Special Report on Dialysis in New Zealand

On the 5th of May, ANZDATA/ANZSN released its special report into the state of dialysis in New Zealand. Board member Dr Curtis Walker and General Manager Madi Keay have given several interviews in response to this report.

The report highlights workforce shortages, funding constraints and limited ability to expand capacity, even where infrastructure exists. Some links to our statements can be found below.

See the reports below:







GM Madi Keay on Newstalk



Dr Curtis Walker on RNZ



As some of you may have seen, Polly Gillespie chose Kidney Health NZ as her charity of choice for Celebrity Treasure Island 2026, and we couldn't be more grateful! This was a massive opportunity to raise awareness about kidney disease and how it impacts on individuals and whānau all throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Even though the outcome wasn't what we'd hoped for, we loved watching Polly and cheering her on every step of the way!

Here's a little statement as to what motivated Polly to pick us:

"My charity is Kidney Health NZ. It's personal for me because my very good friend and father of my children, Grant (Kereama), gave his kidney to a very close friend of ours, and my sister-in-law has just donated her kidney to her son who was

very ill, and my other sister-in-law donated her kidney to a friend's very ill child. So, it's been very personal for me from the donor perspective and the people receiving the kidney. There's a lot of people on the waiting list, so I wanted to do my bit to raise money and awareness."

We hope to have an interview with Polly for our next newsletter so stay tuned!



Research Hub

Do you want to participate in meaningful research that may have positive effects for future CKD patients?

We have several valuable research opportunities coming available in the next few months. The areas of study include polycystic kidney disease (PKD), a paediatric uropathy and dilated urinary tract registry as well as a substance use and CKD survey. If any of this sounds interesting to you, visit our website and check our 'Research Hub'.

Click here