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## **Renal services expand at Bowral & District Hospital**

Bowral's renal dialysis service has expanded only months after the new service opened, with a second patient now dialysing and an additional nurse starting this month.

"It is an exciting next step bringing expanded renal services to the area," Bowral & District Hospital General Manager Joel Bardsley said.

"Once fully operational, we plan to provide services for four local patients, opening morning and afternoon, six days a week. To support this level of care, a staff recruitment drive is underway."

"I would like to thank the Southern Highlands Renal Appeal as they have been instrumental bringing the service to the area. The community should be very proud."

The home therapies unit is another branch of renal services. The team works with patients who can manage their dialysis at home.

"Nursing staff contact the patients frequently, monitor their bloods and manage them in their home environment, Mr Bardsley said.

This outreach service is in addition to renal supportive care, a South Western Sydney Local Health District program that started in 2015. There were 34 referrals in 2015, 112 in 2017 and this year there are more than 200.

Mr Bardsley said the program supports people whose main focus is quality of life and choose not to have dialysis or are considering stopping dialysis.

"Dialysis is not necessarily the right decision for every patient," he said.

"Instead of patients opting out of dialysis and not receiving further assistance, we offer multidisciplinary support for them and their families,"

"More importantly, it also gives patients a choice in their treatment and it supports them through that decision."

The renal supportive care service is a nurse-led team comprised of a renal physician, palliative physician, social worker and renal dietitian.

"We've had some positive feedback from patients and their families who received care through the renal supportive service."

The South Western Sydney Local Health District will invest more than \$72 million into renal services in 2018/19.