

Media Release

JENNY MACKLIN MP

Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs

WARREN SNOWDON MP

Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health and
Regional Services Delivery

BRENDON GRYLLS MLA

Minister for Lands

Special purpose hostel for Pilbara's Indigenous community

Renal dialysis patients in Indigenous communities in the Pilbara will soon be able to stay in a new hostel in South Hedland, in a joint initiative between the Australian Government's Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) and the Western Australian Government.

The Renal Dialysis Hostel will be built on Crown land made available by the State Government.

It will provide supported accommodation for Indigenous renal patients from Port Hedland and the surrounding Pilbara region who need accommodation while receiving medical treatment.

The proposed hostel will include twin share accommodation for 20 residents with the possibility to extend to 40 resident beds in the future as well as dining, kitchen facilities and some staff accommodation.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin said the \$6 million hostel was being constructed in response to the high rate of renal disease in WA.

"In Port Hedland, in particular, the rate of renal disease is increasing and it was obvious that the construction of a special purpose hostel was essential to accommodate patients who need dialysis and other treatment at regional hospitals," Ms Macklin said.

"This joint effort by the Australian and WA Governments will enable Indigenous patients to access comfortable accommodation while receiving medical treatment."

Minister for Indigenous Health Warren Snowdon said the incidence of kidney disease amongst Indigenous Australians is four to six times that of the non-Indigenous population, and this initiative will provide much needed support.

"For many Indigenous people, renal dialysis means ongoing care a long way from home, and this accommodation will help alleviate some of the stress of being sick in



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an unfamiliar town.“

WA Minister for Lands Brendon Grylls said the land was ideally positioned in the town centre of South Hedland.

“The selected location is close to the new Port Hedland Hospital and the Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Health Service making it easy for patients, visitors and medical staff to access the sites, especially in emergency situations,” Mr Grylls said.

“This much needed project is strongly supported by the Town of Port Hedland, LandCorp, and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure.”

Construction will start in November 2009 following planning approvals.

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