

November 24, 2014

MEDIA ALERT

Transplant Australia's CEO is doing it for the kids – one kilometre at a time.

For Transplant Australia CEO, Chris Thomas the last 8 weeks have been a long journey ...4,226 to be exact.

This week Chris will be completing his solo push bike ride from Perth to Sydney, finishing his 56 day journey at Government House, Sydney.

Over the past seven years as CEO of the national charity promoting organ and tissue donation, Transplant Australia, Chris has seen firsthand, the daily struggle some transplant recipients experience post transplantation. And he has decided to do something about it – by riding his push bike from Perth to Sydney.

Combining a personal dream to ride across Australia and a professional vision to offer sporting rehabilitation programs to transplant kids, Chris has launched the Transplant Trek for Kids.

Organ transplantation, by its very nature, is an extremely invasive surgical procedure. It is generally preceded by a long and strenuous path to recovery, which is often coupled with poor health – a direct result of the immune suppressant drugs that recipients must take following their transplant for the rest of their lives.

At times all of these factors contribute to a loss of motivation to exercise – particularly within children who feel isolated and alienated from their peers. Parents are also understandable, extremely cautious of any activity/sport, this often leads to a loss of motivation to exercise and feelings of isolation amongst transplant kids. Transplant Trek for Kids will launch the 'Exercise for Life' initiative to combat this trend and get transplant kids making the most of life again.

“What the kids really need is an 'Exercise for Life' program to help them get out of their cotton wool and exercise before and after their transplant. My aim is to help these kids understand they need to be as healthy as possible around their transplant and to make exercise and healthy living a life-long commitment – as well as provide them with a support network of other kids who share in the same journey.”

Donations towards Chris' ride will research into the best intervention strategies to help transplant kids exercise along with purchasing a body composition machine for the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne and Westmead Children's Hospital Sydney.



To celebrate Chris' return there will be a welcome home event, details as follows:

Date: 29 November 2014

Time: 11:30am

Location: Government House Sydney

Media Opportunity:

- **Photo opportunity of Chris riding into Government House completing his journey**
- **Transplant recipient Tianna (9yrs), will be conducting a Q&A session about Chris' ride**
- **Governor of NSW The Honorable David Hurley will be present for photos with Chris**

About Transplant Australia

Transplant Australia exists to make the most of life – promoting the life-saving benefits of organ and tissue donation to the Australian Public and supporting those most vulnerable through their journey back to the fullness of life. Transplant Australia's mission is to be a strong advocate for best practice in the organ and tissue donation sector, to promote its life saving benefits to governments and the Australian public and to provide all those touched by transplantation with support, education and guidance to improve their health, quality of life and well-being.

For more information please contact

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