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Ronald's story to be told

■ Cally Dupe

It's been more than two decades since Maria Morgan gave her son Ronald the best gift she could, one of her own kidneys, which enabled him to live independently for 23 years.

On Mother's Day 2014 — after the first kidney started to fail — Ronald was gifted a kidney from a stranger and his life was changed for the second time.

The family, who live in Wyndham, will feature on Australian Story on November 2, when a documentary about Mr Morgan's battle with early-onset renal failure is aired for the first time.

The documentary was made by filmmaker and director of Mad Bastards, Brendan Fletcher and Paul Bell, who have a long-standing relationship with the family.

"We hope it brings forward the challenges of dealing with kidney disease in Aboriginal communities ... it gives a good idea of what it's like to live in a remote place and not have access to the services you do in a big town," Mr Fletcher said.

Filming started in 2013 and followed Ronald's journey, as his clinical condition and treatment requirements determined his movements between his home of Wyndham and Perth.

"The story shows Ronald's journey, as a dialysis patient and then his wife and children and siblings, their journey and

experience of trying to be potential donors and all the hurdles we went through," Mrs Morgan said.

During the next few years, the film will be shown to doctors and nurses as part of a health and education package rolled out by Menzies School of Health Research.

"Kidney patients, and nurses and doctors training to work in remote communities will see it," Mr Fletcher said.

Mrs Morgan said she hoped her family's story would be a "useful tool" and encourage people to become organ donors.

"When he had his first transplant, that was pretty easy, but the second time we went through horrible stuff," she said.

"You don't walk into a renal transplant office in Perth and pick up a brochure about becoming a donor, there is no information. We have a low organ transplant rate in Australia, but if people don't know how to do it then they won't."

Mother's Day will be shown on ABC TV's Australian Story on November 2.



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Maria Morgan and her son Ronald Morgan's story will feature in Mother's Day, a documentary to be shown on Australian Story on November 2. Picture: Paul Bell