Healthy win for the NT

SUNDAY Territorian
OUR SAY

A good move but too long overdue

KIDNEY disease sufferers will be the major beneficiaries of a new Medicare item announced today.

This is undoubtedly positive news for health services in remote communities and the Government should be commended for the action. This announcement comes as the final posthumous album of Yolngu singer Gurrumul hit No.1 in the ARIA charts this week, exemplifying the incredible loss we all suffer as a nation from the failure of successive governments to adequately address indigenous health issues in remote communities.

The death of Gurrumul at 46 highlights the crippling impacts kidney failure have on indigenous Australians.

The incidence of end-stage kidney disease in the NT is three or four times the national Australian figures, and it is largely confined to indigenous communities.

The Territory has been the hardest hit in the nation from this issue and our health care system has been struggling to meet demand. Hopefully, this announcement will put us at the forefront of treatment for kidney disease, not just playing catch up - and definitely not lagging behind in the ways that we have been.