**Facts:**

- In Australia, people over the age of 65 years are the fastest growing kidney disease patient population.
- 83% of this older kidney disease patient population are treated with haemodialysis.
- Patients receiving haemodialysis spend at least 3 days a week in hospital for treatment, which equates to approximately 156 days a year.

**Background:**

- Patients with kidney disease can be treated with haemodialysis (a machine to filter the patients’ blood). Haemodialysis requires access to the bloodstream, using either a catheter or fistula. The risks of using a catheter compared to a fistula are different.
- Patients receiving haemodialysis spend a lot of time in hospital for multiple reasons and it is unknown if the use of a catheter versus fistula affects this.
- For older patients with kidney disease, time out of hospital and quality of life can be just as important as survival.

**Aims:**

- Assess the effectiveness of a catheter compared to a fistula in relation to the rate (number over time) of access-related procedures/interventions and extra hospital days.
- To determine whether patients who have a fistula have a lower rate of hospital days and access-related procedures than those receiving a catheter within the first 24 months of dialysis initiation.

**Methods:**

- This study will use a randomised, single-blinded, parallel-arm, controlled, multi-centre trial design, initially involving four kidney services across Australia, with expansion plans to include more kidney services in Australia, New Zealand and across Asia.
- Randomisation will be allocated equally to either a catheter or fistula and will be applied at the service level.
- The major outcomes will be the rate of access-related procedures/interventions and extra hospital days, as well as gaining an understanding of the quality-of-life implications of each access type.

**Impact:**

- Evidence for which access type, catheter or fistula, is the best to use has not been previously studied in an older kidney disease patient population.
- This trial will provide information about the best approaches for dialysis management in older patient populations.