

Social work support for kidney patients and their families

This leaflet gives information about the social workers in the kidney team and how we can help or advise you, your family or your carers with some of the social care issues associated with kidney disease.

What do social workers do?

We may be able to offer you advice and support with:

- **benefits** – we can help to work out what you may be entitled to and advise you on how to apply
- **family and carers** – we can give information on support for carers
- **finances** – we can give you information about bills and debt management and assist with grant applications
- **housing** – we can advise you about housing issues
- **legal issues** – we can advise and give information about immigration issues, power of attorney and making wills, and we can explain how to access legal services
- **moving from hospital to home** – we work with the ward teams to support and prepare patients going home after a long or complex stay in hospital.
- **practical help at home** – we can give you information about the help that is available from your local Social Services Department and advise you on how to access it
- **work issues** – we can discuss how to negotiate hours and conditions with employers.

If you have a concern that is not on this list we may still be able to help or put you in touch with someone who can.

We see people in the kidney clinic, on wards or in the dialysis units. We can also offer advice over the telephone.

Is what I discuss with the social worker confidential?

Yes, and our records are kept separate from medical notes and locked away. However, we are obliged to speak to a kidney doctor, nurse or other health professional if we feel that you or someone else is at risk of harm.

We may also share information to help plan your future clinical or social care.

How do I contact a social worker?

You can either speak to a member of your kidney care team who can refer you to us or you can contact us directly on **020 7188 4023** or **020 7188 5684**.

Further information

DirectGov – This government website offers advice on all public services including finance, benefits, housing, employment.

w: www.gov.uk

You can also contact your local council to find out about more community services, such as travel passes and applying for social housing.

Department for work and pensions

For jobseeker's allowance, income support, universal credit you will need to apply online:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions

For personal independence payment, employment and support allowance enquiries, please telephone on:

t: [0800 055 6688](tel:08000556688)

Citizens Advice Bureau – A national charity providing free, confidential, impartial advice on finance, legal matters and other problems.

w: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

t: 03444 111 444

Kidney Care UK (previously BKPA)

A kidney patient support charity, providing practical, financial and emotional support for kidney patients and their families

w: www.kidneycareuk.org

t: 01420 541424

Contact us

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints)

e: complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815

e: languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

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