

Peer support for kidney patients

**What peer support is and how
it could help you, your family
or carers**

What is peer support?

Peer support aims to provide support for kidney patients, their families or carers by providing an opportunity to talk to an experienced kidney patient on a one-to-one basis.

Who are peer supporters?

Peer supporters are unpaid kidney patient volunteers. They have completed formal training to offer one-to-one support and have undergone a number of checks – including a criminal records check – to enable them to do this.

How can I meet a peer supporter?

Ask your kidney doctor or nurse or call the consultant nurse for advanced kidney care on 020 7188 7924. They will match you with a peer supporter and arrange contact.

Will I have anything in common with my supporter?

Yes: you will share your common experiences as a kidney patient. If you wish, you can ask to be put in touch with someone of a similar age or background, or someone undergoing a specific type of treatment.

Can I request peer support at any time?

Yes, as a kidney patient there may be many times when you may wish to talk to a peer supporter, such as:

- when you are first given your diagnosis
- when you are considering treatment choices
- any time that you feel it may be helpful to talk to another patient.

Is peer support only available for patients?

No, it is also available for families and carers of kidney patients.

Is peer support confidential?

All discussions between yourself and the peer supporter will be treated sensitively. However, the peer supporter is obliged to speak to a kidney doctor or nurse if they feel that you or someone else is at risk of harm.

What can peer supporters not offer?

Peer supporters cannot offer advice about medical treatments. You should get medical advice from a health professional such as:

- your GP
- your kidney doctor
- your kidney nurse
- an appropriate member of the healthcare team.

Peer supporters cannot offer counselling. Professional psychological help and counselling are available through the healthcare team or by contacting the renal psychologists (contact details are on page 4).

Contact us

For more information about peer support please contact

Sue Cox, Consultant nurse for advanced kidney care

t: 020 7188 7924

Renal psychologists

t: 020 7188 9770 / 7845

Renal social workers

Tel: 020 7188 5684 /
4023

National Kidney Patient Helpline

t: 0845 601 02 09

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline – If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

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 support services – If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS 111 – Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

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