

Peer support for kidney patients

Information for patients
and relatives about
available peer support

What is peer support?

During your time as a kidney patient you may need to make a number of decisions about your care. Your kidney doctor and nurse can provide you with all the relevant information, but sometimes it is helpful to discuss things with people who have been through a similar experience and/or who share a similar lifestyle, beliefs or language as yourself.

Peer support aims to:

Provide support for kidney patients and their families by putting them in touch with another person with first-hand experience of kidney disease for an informal one-to-one chat. This could be either a patient or carer.

Who are peer supporters?

Peer supporters must:

- be a patient or family member of a patient with first-hand experience of kidney disease
- be registered as an unpaid volunteer with the Royal Free Charity
- receive special training and approval by the hospital to provide peer support
- have undergone a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check.

Peer supporters are not:

- medical professionals

- trained counsellors, psychologists or social workers.

How do I become a peer supporter?

There are three main steps to becoming a peer supporter at the Royal Free London:

1. You will be invited to chat with our peer support co-ordinator who will explain more about the role and hear about your personal experience as a kidney patient or carer.
2. You will attend a short half-day training session to prepare you for the role of a peer supporter.
3. You must register with the Royal Free Charity as a volunteer and will be asked to attend a volunteer induction session.

How can I receive peer support?

Please ask your renal team to put you in contact with the peer support coordinator, who will arrange for you to be contacted by an appropriate peer supporter.

Confidentiality

It is expected that a peer support conversation will remain confidential, except in a case where a peer supporter is concerned about the welfare of the patient or other person involved. In such cases the peer supporter should discuss their concerns with the peer support coordinator before discussing the situation with anyone else.

How do I find out more about peer support?

Please ask a member of your kidney team to put you in touch with our peer support team or email:

rf-tr.renalpeersupport@nhs.net

Emails will be responded to within 5 working days.

If you have any feedback on this leaflet or for a full list of references for it, please email:

rf.communications@nhs.net

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please ask a member of staff.

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