

# Renal Psychosocial Team

## Counselling, Psychotherapy, Social Work, Mental Health Support

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Information for patients, partners and carers

### Renal Psychosocial Team

Kidney disease and renal failure can be hard to cope with for patients and their loved ones. This is completely normal and valid because life's problems, including illness, are often upsetting and challenging to navigate.

We are a team of psychotherapists, counsellors, psychologists and social workers who can offer support for your emotional, psychological and social needs. For patients with a diagnosed, severe mental illness we have access to a specialist mental health nurse and a psychiatrist to help manage treatments like dialysis at the same time as coping with mental illness.

## How can counselling and psychological therapy help me?

Living with a long term health condition like kidney disease, or caring for someone who is ill, can cause a mixture of feelings that can be hard to cope with at times. Talking therapy can help you to explore, process and make sense of your concerns and emotional difficulties. These can include:

- Adjusting to your diagnosis and the changes and losses it has brought
- Coping with the symptoms of the illness
- Getting used to life on dialysis or with a transplant
- Managing feelings like low mood or depression, anxiety, shock and anger
- Work and family concerns
- Coping with the effects of your illness on relationships or sexual intimacy
- Managing concerns about your body image and how you look
- Handling feelings of low self-esteem, such as feeling useless or a burden on others
- Worry about your illness getting worse or your transplant failing
- Coping emotionally at the end of life

## What happens during my session?

When you see one of our psychotherapists, counsellors or psychologists you get the chance to talk with someone who is trained to support your emotional wellbeing. We provide a safe and confidential space where you can share your thoughts, feelings and concerns. You will not be forced to talk about anything you don't want to or made to feel uncomfortable. Using talking therapies we may be able to suggest coping strategies. We will discuss with you what you might find the most helpful. You might only need a few sessions to make a difference, though you can have more if you need them. We can see your loved ones or carers as well – separately or with you. We offer 50 minute consultations in person, by phone and by video call.



## How do I access the service?

You can ask a healthcare professional in the renal department to refer you, or you can refer yourself by calling us on **020 3299 6132** or emailing: [kch-tr.RenalCounselling@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.RenalCounselling@nhs.net)

## Renal Social Workers

The Renal Unit has its own social workers. They can help with the various problems that arise from having a long-term illness like kidney disease. They provide information, advice and assistance to all renal patients - whether outpatients or inpatients.

These are some of the things they can help you with:

**Benefits** – help to work out what you may be entitled to.

**Finances** – advice about bills, debt management and the possibility of help from renal charities.

**Housing** – Advice on how to apply for housing and housing transfers.

**Practical help at home** – information about the help that is available from your local Social Services Department and assistance to access it.

**Relatives and carers** – advice about getting practical help or relief for carers.

**Legal issues** – Signposting to specialist services for advice regarding power of attorney and making wills.

If you have a problem that is not on the list, we may still be able to help, or put you in touch with someone who can. Please ask a member of the renal team to refer you, or you can contact us yourself to make an appointment by phone on **020 3299 2801** or by emailing: [kch-tr.renalsocialwork@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.renalsocialwork@nhs.net)



## **Useful contacts:**

### **Kidney Care UK**

01420 541424

[www.kidneycareuk.org](http://www.kidneycareuk.org)

### **King's Kidney Patient Association**

Richard Freeman [info@kkpa.org.uk](mailto:info@kkpa.org.uk)

[www.kkpa.org.uk](http://www.kkpa.org.uk)

### **National Kidney Federation**

Kidney patients helpline

0800 169 0936

[www.kidney.org.uk](http://www.kidney.org.uk)

### **Diabetes UK**

0345 123 2399

[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

### **Lupus UK**

01708 731251

[www.lupusuk.org.uk](http://www.lupusuk.org.uk)

### **Shelter**

0300 330 1234

[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

### **Carers UK**

0808 808 7777

[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

### **City and East London Bereavement Service**

020 3022 5177

[www.celbs.org.uk](http://www.celbs.org.uk)

### **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Freephone Helpline

0808 808 1677

[www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

### **Relate**

Helpline for relationship issues

0300 100 1234

[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

### **Age UK**

Helpline

0800 678 1602

[www.ageuk.org](http://www.ageuk.org)

### **Samaritans**

116 123

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **Mind**

0300 123 3393

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**If you would like this leaflet in a different format or language please contact PALS on 020 3299 3601.**