

Health professional
guide to using the
**My Kidneys
My Choice**
Decision-Making
Guide



How to use the guide

The My Kidneys My Choice

Decision-Making Guide was designed to be used at more than one visit and to be taken home. It should not be used as a tool to replace education but rather to guide the process.

My Kidneys

Discuss at the first appointment with guidance from the Nephrologist on which treatment options are suitable.

My life, My independence, My situation

Complete during first appointment or take home.

My options

This summary is designed to be used concurrent to the education process. It may be used to start discussions about treatment options and to recap about treatment options.

My choice

This section is for the person to complete and may be done at home or at a follow-up education appointment.

My questions

A space for a patient to note their questions and bring them back to subsequent appointments.

Keeping track

A space for patient or healthcare professionals to make notes about the person's healthcare team and decisions made at individual appointments.

1.

Key Messages

- The person has kidney failure, and they will need at least one form of treatment.
- Timely making of a decision is very important to maximise the opportunity to choose the best treatment and be prepared for that treatment ahead of time.
- Education is an important aspect in the decision-making process and Kidney Health Australia offers many resources.
See kidney.org.au/resources
- This is a personal choice.
- There are many people with kidney failure undergoing treatment, the person is not alone.

My kidneys

Relevance

Adult Learning Principles

Adults tend to make decisions or learn when they believe it is relevant to them. Adults may attend education, but it does not mean they will leave the room educated. Without exploring this first basic step, some adults will sit through education thinking “I am going to have a transplant – I don’t need to know any of this”. However, if they are not suitable or the transplant plan fails, they may find themselves in a situation where they are suddenly unprepared.

Denial

It is not unusual for those attending education for kidney failure, especially if the diagnosis is quickly made in the late stages, to think; “I don’t know why I’m being told this – this couldn’t possibly be happening to me”. If the person continues to be in denial it will be very difficult to educate them about their treatment options. All educators should ensure that the person is not in denial, and if they are, to work through this using appropriate social supports.

Individual differences and cultural considerations

There will be people who don’t realise that they can be part of the decision-making process or in fact prefer not to be. Empowering them to get involved is likely to be beneficial and could lead to better health outcomes.

It may also reduce the feeling of having no control. Healthcare professionals should provide culturally safe care and understand the diverse factors that can impact kidney disease outcomes. In First Nations Australians, in line with the person’s personal preference, include family and community in education and liaise with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners and interpreters. For more information see CARI Guidelines:

Recommendations for culturally safe and clinical kidney care for First Nations Australians.

Practical Tips

Use the **My Kidneys** page as a prompt and conversation opener. Consider using questions to check if the person is ready for the decision-making process, such as:

- Did you know your kidneys are close to failure and this means you will need treatment?
- Did you know that you have options and that certain treatments may suit you better than others?
- How are you feeling right now?
- Are you ready to start the education process?

2.

My life, My independence, My situation

Key Messages

- The person's lifestyle, independence and overall situation are important factors to consider when making the treatment choice.
- Relationships are important, particularly for the ongoing success of a treatment.
- Their underlying personality may predict the best treatment, i.e. self-managed for those who prefer to have control over their life.
- The future with dialysis treatment will change the daily lifestyle, but choosing the best type for them will change it the least.

Relevance

This section is for both the person receiving guidance and the healthcare professional to gain an understanding of what is important in the person's life. It hopefully should provide valuable insights into relationships and daily routines of the person that will support the selection of a treatment.

Practical Tips

These sections may be used as a discussion tool and is ideally completed by the person in their own time, as they require time to reflect and make notes. Once completed it can be brought back if multiple appointments fulfil the process of education within your unit.



3.

My options

This section is split into two parts. The first considers the key factors of dialysis, transplant and conservative care within a series of headings. The second section considers the home dialysis options and the centre-based dialysis options. It is only designed to be a summary but does provide a take home, quick reference guide to start or finish the education process. It is not designed to replace education.

Key Messages

Main types of Kidney Failure treatment

- There are three main options when your kidneys fail.
- Comprehensive conservative care is considered a treatment option. It focuses on treating symptoms, but it cannot stop the decline of your kidney function.
- Kidney transplant is not for everyone and there may be a waiting time to get a kidney.
- Most people can have dialysis but there are different types. Not all will be available to everybody.

Key Messages

The differences in dialysis

- Home dialysis has three options.
- Centre-based dialysis has one option.
- Any type of dialysis may impact your availability to work.
- Centre-based treatments involve more travel and less flexibility.
- All options have nursing support but most support is offered in centre-based treatment.
- Home-based treatments allow greater personal treatment control.
- Holiday travel is easier on Peritoneal Dialysis.
- All options involve some surgery.

Relevance

Practical Tips

Use these tables for a quick summary to start the education process. They can also be used as a summary at a follow-up appointment or phone-call, with questions related to certain headings to determine if the person really understands their options.

It is also important to provide more detailed educational opportunities:

- One on one interviews
- Group education
- Visits with home dialysis team
- Take home written materials
- Websites
- Referral to Kidney Health Australia's resources and support services.

4.

My choice

This step is to affirm the decision-making process and allow the person to write down key factors for them related to choosing a particular option over others. This would ideally be completed at home by the person prior to the final decision-making appointment.

Key Messages (My thoughts)

- There are three main treatment options. The Nephrologist would have indicated which options are available to the person to choose from.
- There are positive and negative aspects related to each choice.

Key Messages (Am I ready to make a choice?)

- Are they ready to make an informed decision?
- This is their opportunity to write on paper what they are feeling.

Relevance

Practical Tips

Ask the person to complete this section before they come back to discuss the final decision.

Check if their listed Positives and Negatives relate to misconceptions about a certain treatment type. Highlight the treatment outcome facts if they are still wavering, or to confirm their choice is informed.



Pictured: Hayley

5.

My questions

This section is designed to allow the person to write their questions down prior to the final appointment. The questions will also be a good indicator as to whether the person really does understand the treatment options. If not, it is strongly suggested that education is repeated where the gaps are detected.

Pictured: Malcolm

Keeping track

This section is designed to allow the person to make notes for discussion with the healthcare team and to record decisions made with them. This can help with keeping track of what has been discussed and decided in the past and provides the opportunity to keep track of appointments the person has had with multi-disciplinary team members.



Connect with us

Freecall 1800 454 363
kidney.org.au
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Thank you to our community of kidney heroes for sharing their photos with us, contributing to our important resources.



If you have a hearing or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service on **1800 555 677** or **relay.service.com.au**
For all types of services ask for **1800 454 363**