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PAC *Speaks*

A NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

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A Transplant at 77: “I Feel like I’ve been Born Again”

As told by Donnie and Elsie Jacobs, Queens, NY



I retired from the post office in 2002, a year after my wife retired from her job in the school system. We planned on travelling, we took cruises, and enjoyed our retirement until I started getting sick. We found out that I had high blood pressure. No matter what we did, in 2008, my kidneys failed, and I had to start dialysis.

Dialysis was getting on my nerves. I was washed out after treatments, and some days, I could barely make it to my chair when I got home. Being on dialysis for four hours, three times a week took a lot out of life. We stopped our travel plans, when we looked into taking a dialysis cruise, it was thousands of dollars, and insurance would not pay for Dialysis at Sea.

In the first few months after I started dialysis, the staff asked me if I wanted to be listed for a transplant. I was a little concerned about my age, but I said yes, and did everything that they asked. Elsie was unsure; she didn’t think that they would give a kidney to someone my age. The people at the transplant center were wonderful, they treat us like family. After all of the medical tests and appointments, in 2013, Elsie was at my side when the calls came. The first call didn’t work out, but two weeks later, I had a second call, a young girl had donated organs, and I was given her kidney.

I was transplanted on Tuesday, and Elsie and I were at home by Friday. I feel like I’ve been born again, it’s a new life. Elsie says I am happier too. Now we have time to go out to lunch, and shopping and do all of the things that I was too washed out to do when I was on dialysis. We’ve been married for over 55 years, and now we are looking forward to a European cruise.

I would recommend a kidney transplant to everybody, it’s the only doctor’s office that I don’t mind going to.

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To file a grievance, please contact:

End-Stage Renal Disease Network of New York 1979 Marcus Avenue, Lake Success, NY 11042-1072

Patient Toll-Free: 800 238-3773 Main: 516 209-5578 Fax: 516 326-8929

E-mail: info@nw2.esrd.net; Web: www.esrdny.ipro.org

**You're never too old...
to laugh, to love,
to dream...**



**...or to go for a
kidney transplant
evaluation/referral.**

The first step in the Transplant Journey is to talk about it

Some questions to ask your Nephrologist (Kidney Doctor):

- What is the cause, name, and description of my kidney problem?
- What types of treatments can I choose from?
- What are the benefits and risks of a kidney transplant?
- Do I have a choice between a living-donor transplant and a deceased donor transplant?
- What do the transplant evaluation and testing processes include?
- What are the health risks to a living donor who might donate a kidney to me?
- How do my dialysis center and my transplant hospital relate to each other?
- Why is tissue typing important?

Some questions to ask Transplant Center Staff:

- What is the hospital's experience with kidney or kidney/pancreas transplants?
- Who will tell my family and me the details of the transplant process?
- What expenses will be paid by my insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid coverage? What will I have to pay?
- What types of living-donor transplants does the hospital do?
- Where will the donor evaluation be done?
- What if my donor is not compatible?
- Do you do Donor Chain transplants?
- How long is the local kidney or kidney/pancreas transplant waiting list?

About the ESRD Network Patient Advisory Committee

The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) of the End Stage Renal Disease Network of New York is a statewide organization of patients and/or family members who volunteer their time to represent the Network to their facility and their facility to the Network.

The Mission of the PAC

The Patient Advisory Committee, through its representatives in dialysis and transplant units, provides a link between patients and unit staff and opens opportunities for statewide communication for those in the renal community.

For more information on becoming a PAC member, please contact the Network at (800) 238-3773 or visit us on the web at: <http://esrdny.ipro.org/overview/>

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