

Stories from patients who have received a Kidney Transplant at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham

All names were supplied but withheld

If you would like to add your own story please send it to the
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kidney Patients' Association

An encouraging storey

'At the age of 19 I joined the Police Force in Birmingham, this was 1969. After a virus attacked my kidneys, I had to leave the Police Force after about 18 months, because the prognosis was not good and for the first two years in the police, your status is provisional. A year or later at the age of 22 I commenced dialysis. A kidney machine at home, 30 hours a week , 3 x 10 hours overnight. Then I worked in the daytime. I had a very strict salt free diet, and restricted fluid intake, and only able to be away from home for 2 or 3 days.

This restricted lifestyle lasted for six years until I received a successful kidney transplant, in 1978, at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. The transplant completely changed my life.

Having been advised of the Transplant Games, which was first held in Portsmouth, in 1978. I thought I would like to get involved. So in 1979, I took part in the 5 mile walk along the sea front at Southsea, and to my surprise won. This started an involvement with the Transplant Games for over 20 years. I was a competitor, Birmingham Team Manager, Transplant Games Management Committee member. and Membership Secretary.

As a competitor I represented GB six times, in middle distance races, (1,500 metres, 5k and 800 metres)winning some medals including 2 golds. My last time was in Sydney, in 1997, where I won gold for 800 metres and silver for 1,500 metres. Apart from the Transplant Games, I have also completed seven marathons , including the London Marathon twice (1982 and 1990).

On a personal note, my wife and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary in October. My transplant was 47 years old in September. As I reflect, and am very grateful to the relatives who allowed the donation of their loved ones organs, at a time of much grief for themselves, and allowed me to have a very fulfilled life '.

Peter Frazier

I had renal problems since I was born. They recognised it back when I was little at Heartlands. Was in hospital most of my child life. As I got older I had go on dialysis. Did it at home and work four times a day I did it at work first one in rest room at 5.30 am. Then badly needed a transplant.



My sister Sharon and my mom Lyn were both good matches but my sister decided to do it because of my lovely moms age. It's now been 25 years on March 3rd and my life changed so much. I now work and also have a little boy Charlie who's nearly 7 in May. Also my sister is well and has boy Alfie who's nearly 16. I still go every 4 months for check-ups at the Q.E.
Thank you for reading

I was just 19-years-old and one of the first kidney transplant patients at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB) when I underwent my operation in May 1976 - and 49 YEARS later my donor organ is still going strong.

I'm living proof that transplant patients can go on to live long and very full lives I'm eager to make sure that others get the same chance – by backing awareness campaigns on World Kidney Day.



After my transplant, I remember asking how long the kidney would last. They told me to ask again in three months. Then they said they thought it might last three years and after three years they admitted they didn't really know and just told me to get on with living my life – and here we are 40 years later.

My kidneys had first failed when I was six and I spent six months in hospital followed by many years of ill health as a child until my kidneys failed again in my early teens.

I was really ill at the time and eventually had to go on haemodialysis'.

This meant trips from home in Wolverhampton to what was then the North Staffordshire Royal Infirmary in Stoke for 10-hour dialysis sessions three times a week while at the same time my diet was also severely restricted – with little protein allowed and only one pint of fluid per day.

Ten hours of dialysis three times a week takes over your whole life, On the other days you recover. It was no life for a teenager.”

After one false alarm I got the call from the Q.E. to say that a compatible donor organ had become available and I headed to Birmingham for my transplant. But there was an anxious wait after the operation.

The kidney didn't start working for two weeks. At the time doctors told me that if it took longer to start working it might last a long time. So the fact that mine took those two weeks to start working probably says something – given that it is still working now.

I know nothing about my donor and regret never having had the chance to pass on my gratitude for a gift which gave me my life back.

Without my transplant, I would never have been able to do what I've done and countless other things I never dreamed I would be able to do.

I've got two sons, who are now in their twenties. I've done lots of travelling, and lived a fantastic life.

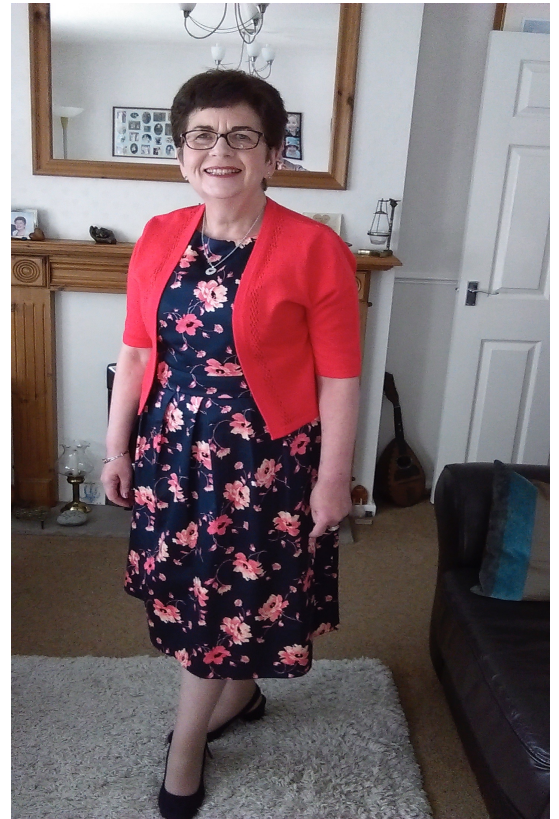
QEHB consultant nephrologist Dr Adnan Sharif said: "What Peter has achieved with his donor kidney is an inspiration to all transplant patients".

Hello.

I was very fortunate to receive a kidney from a donor on 30th March 1998 after nearly 7 years on C.A.P.D., so I will be celebrating 20 wonderful years as a transplant patient. I am so grateful for all my care from QEH from all who have been involved in my care particularly Miss Buist who was the surgeon that performed my operation.

I have been able to see my three children grow up and marry and now with my husband Jon have 5 wonderful Grandchildren. I also started my own Childminding business which I was able to care for many children over the past twenty years. We have also been able to visit many places like Italy, Croatia, Switzerland and more.

I will always be so grateful to my donor and his family for such a precious gift of life.



The Gift of Life

I shall never forget the time when I had my Kidney Transplant 27 years ago.

I had been OK on PD for 3 years but the change I felt in the days following my transplant was amazing.

A new life, a fresh start, getting my energy back. I felt so pleased and grateful to everyone at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

But with all the joy and feeling great, I felt a sadness and a feeling of sorrow, for the person who had made this possible. A man out there who had been prepared to be a donor, who did not want to be one, had passed away suddenly and a very generous family had agreed to say yes at the most difficult time in their lives.

A day never goes by without a thought about them and how wonderful their gift of life was and what a difference it made.

How I Benefited from the Renal Transplant Service at QEH

As a longstanding patient and a successful beneficiary of the Renal transplant service, I am extremely pleased to be celebrating the momentous occasion of 50th anniversary of the service at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

My story started in 1986, when I was diagnosed with chronic kidney failure. It was initially quite a shock to find out that I was suffering from this condition and I realised there was likely to be a long road ahead. Back then, the renal team advised a very restricted diet and I was advised about a lot of changes that would be required by the renal dietician. This meant the end of a lot of my favourite fried goods, and thankfully my wife set to work carefully planning and balancing our meals to fit the strict guidance. There were further alterations that were needed when I suffered from gout and anaemia, but we were able to manage these issues with the support of the renal team.

In January 2001 I discovered that I was going to need dialysis, which would involve going through peritoneal dialysis 4 times a day. At the time I was working full time as an eye surgeon and had a very busy schedule balancing clinics and operating. It was a very tough time for me, as I tried to continue with my duties as before, but often struggled to find time and a suitable location to but dialyse in between my work commitments and was left exhausted at the end of the day. My children were very young at the time, and I was often too tired to spend time with them or help my wife in taking them to their school and music activities. It was really difficult for me to watch my wife struggle to juggle her own work responsibilities in a hospital lab as well as managing the household and looking after the children. I then switched to a night time dialysis machine that was much less disruptive to my days, but also had its frustrations. This meant an unsettled night of sleep and being attached to a machine for 8 hours a night.

In January 2003, I was finishing my lunch and getting ready to go back to work when I received a call from the transplant service asking me to attend the hospital as a suitable donor has

been identified. I can't quite describe the joy I had when I heard this news and was immediately overcome with emotion. Once I had regained my composure,

I contacted work to find cover for me and my family and went straight to QEH. It all happened very quickly, and I had the transplant surgery done by Miss Laura Buist that night.

Thankfully the surgery was successful and when I awoke the following morning I could immediately feel the vast difference in myself. It was a difficult time on the ward as there is always the chance of rejection and there were some other patients who were not quite as lucky. I have to say that the surgeon and the rest of the team were remarkable in the dedication they showed after the surgery and the care and attention I received from the nursing staff.

After my transplant, my life completely changed. I was able to enjoy my family and social life again and we were able to go abroad as a family. I can't explain how much better I felt in myself and I had a new lease of life. Now 15 years later, I am still unbelievably lucky to say my donor kidney is still working well and apart from a few infections along the way, I am in still in good health. I have to say that this is almost entirely down to the dedication of the Renal Transplant team, my kidney donor and my wife. They have supported us over the years and have gone above and beyond the call of duty, and for this I am eternally grateful.

I had the unique opportunity to meet with the parents of my kidney donor which was a very special moment. I was overjoyed to meet them and it was difficult to put into words my gratitude, but they took solace in the fact their son had given me this gift. We have kept in touch and will be visiting them again soon.

I cannot thank the Medical and Nursing team of the renal unit at QEH enough for their exceptional service and my special



thanks to Dr Graham Lipkin for all the care & support given to me over the years.