

# Trailblazing Towards Transplant: A Transplant Patient Peer Program Guide

## What Is A Transplant Patient Peer Program?

A Transplant Patient Peer Program is a program that connects kidney transplant recipients with dialysis patients to support their journey towards transplantation. A *transplant* patient, known as a Transplant Trailblazer, is paired one-on-one with local (e.g., same or sister dialysis facility or home program, same transplant center, same healthcare system) a *dialysis patient*, also called a Dialysis Peer. The Transplant Patient Peer Program is goal-focused, can include family and caregiver interaction, and includes multiple ways for Transplant Trailblazers and Dialysis Peers to connect.

## Who Is Involved?

- ESRD Networks: Promote the program to dialysis facilities and transplant centers and share program resources with facilities and centers.
- Dialysis Centers: Promote the program to people receiving dialysis and welcome Transplant Trailblazers into the facility's activities and space.
- Transplant Centers: Identify potential transplant recipients to be Trailblazers for Dialysis Peers who are journeying towards receiving a transplant.
- Transplant Trailblazers: Provide emotional support and practical tips from their own transplant experience to guide their Dialysis Peer to getting on the waitlist, being active on the waitlist, and ultimately receiving a transplant.
- Dialysis Peers: Engage with their Transplant Trailblazer and receive guidance and support on their journey to transplant.

## What's Included in This Guide?

- Introduction
- ESRD Network Role
- Dialysis Facility Role
- Transplant Center Role
- The Transplant Trailblazer Role
- The Dialysis Peer Role
- Multiple Ways to Connect



## Program Goals

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Share transplant journey experiences to inspire people on dialysis to seek transplant as their preferred treatment choice

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Enhance patient awareness of kidney transplant options, including high-Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI) and increased-risk kidneys

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Activate patient motivation to pursue a kidney transplant by preparing them to get on the waitlist, remaining active on the waitlist, and ultimately receiving a transplant

# *We're Better Together*

Share | Inspire | Activate

## **Who Are Transplant Trailblazers and What Can They Do?**

A Transplant Trailblazer is a kidney transplant recipient who provides guidance and emotional support by sharing their transplant experience, including preparing for the waitlist, staying active on the waitlist, being ready for transplant, and post-transplant expectations. Transplant Trailblazers are paired one-on-one with people receiving dialysis treatments. Transplant Trailblazers do not offer medical advice but are encouraged to share their firsthand experience receiving a transplant with their Dialysis Peer.

## **Should I be a Transplant Trailblazer?**

As a transplant recipient, you know better than anyone else what it is like to go through treatment for kidney failure, how to deal with dialysis side effects, and how to manage all the emotions—the highs and the lows—that come with waiting for and getting a transplant. Share your experience and expertise by volunteering as a Transplant Trailblazer with someone who is currently receiving dialysis, is waitlisted and looking to remain active on the waitlist, or is considering a transplant as their preferred treatment option.

## **Would a Transplant Trailblazer Benefit Me?**

As a person on dialysis, understanding how to cope with kidney disease can be overwhelming. There are many people who have been in your shoes. Connecting with someone who's received a transplant to learn about how the choice to pursue transplant impacted their life can be a positive life-changing experience. A Transplant Trailblazer can also support you by answering your questions, connecting you with resources, and even providing emotional support on tough days.



# Who Would Be a Great Transplant Trailblazer or Dialysis Peer?

## Suggested Criteria for a Transplant Trailblazer

- A kidney transplant recipient
- Proud of one's transplant journey and eager to share their story to inspire Dialysis Peers to choose transplant as their preferred treatment
- Familiar with the terms, or received a high-KDPI or increased-risk kidney
- Well-adapted to the challenges faced by Dialysis Peers
- Effective communicator with empathy skills
- A desire to support Dialysis Peers in their transplant journey
- Schedule flexibility to be available for their Dialysis Peer by telephone or other virtual ways, or in-person if program participants are located near each other
- A trusted confidant for their Dialysis Peer

## Suggested Criteria for a Dialysis Peer

- A person who is receiving dialysis either at a dialysis facility or at home
- Someone who is interested in learning about how to get on a transplant waitlist, or a person who is already on the transplant waitlist and is interested in meeting their goal of remaining active on the list and receiving a transplant
- An individual who is interested in learning about their options of being on multiple waitlists or understanding how they might receive an offer sooner by consenting to a high-KDPI kidney, or increased-risk kidney
- Someone who is engaged in their dialysis plan of care and participates in patient activities at their facility , such as education, lobby days, etc.



***I do just about everything I can for the ESRD community. People came together to support me when I had my transplant. Now I'm doing my best to pay that gift forward.***

**TRANSPLANT RECIPIENT  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

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