

Transplant Trailblazer Role

How to Contribute

As someone who's been on dialysis and the transplant waitlist, you are familiar with the ups and downs of kidney disease. Now that you have received a transplant, you can use this experience to share your transplant story and guide a Dialysis Peer along a familiar journey.

How It Works

- 1 Sign up to be a Transplant Trailblazer through your transplant center
- 2 Work closely with your ESRD Network to connect with a dialysis center and a Dialysis Peer
- 3 Attend a kick-off meeting to learn about your role and program expectations
- 4 Support your Dialysis Peer partner through activities that interest you both and fit your schedules
- 5 Provide motivation and encouragement to your Dialysis Peer by sharing your transplant experience
- 6 Celebrate your accomplishments and successes

How will the Transplant Trailblazer benefit?

- + **Remain motivated in your own treatment** by staying engaged in your plan of care and up-to-date on the best treatment opportunities and practices
- + **Expand your leadership skills** by guiding your Dialysis Peer through their treatment journey and times of uncertainty

How to Be a Trusted Partner

How you can help your Dialysis Peer:

- Share insights from your personal experience with receiving a transplant
- Refer your Dialysis Peer to their care team when asked medical questions
- Maintain patient confidentiality
- Provide reassurance and be an empathetic listener
- Encourage Dialysis Peers to remain engaged in their plan of care, maintain doctor appointments, and stay active on the transplant waitlist
- Offer encouragement after a discouraging day and help them to thrive in their circumstances
- Meet at a time and place that is convenient for both people

What you should **not** do for your Dialysis Peer:

- Give any medical advice, including diet options
- Handle their grievances or challenges, always refer them to their social worker or facility administrator
- Borrow or loan money
- Invade their privacy, personal space, or breach their confidentiality

- + **Improve your problem-solving and communication skills** by clearly sharing your own treatment experiences and assist your Dialysis Peer in setting goals to achieve their transplant goals
- + **Contribute to something larger than yourself** by supporting the overall quality of life for people with kidney disease

Dialysis Peer Role

How to Contribute

Meet with your care team to find out how to connect with a Transplant Trailblazer and learn how their journey to receive the gift of life improved their quality of life and can help you. Kidney transplantation can be overwhelming, but there are many people who have been in your shoes and are willing to be your support peer. Your Transplant Trailblazer can also offer support by answering your questions, connecting you with resources, and even providing emotional support on tough days.

How It Works

- 1 Talk with your care team about the program and sign up to be a Dialysis Peer to learn more about kidney transplant
- 2 Your facility will help you get matched and connected with a Transplant Trailblazer
- 3 Attend a program kick-off to learn about ways in which a Transplant Trailblazer can support you
- 4 Seek guidance from your Transplant Trailblazer, listen to their story, and learn from their experiences
- 5 Commit to a positive treatment journey by remaining compliant to your dialysis treatment and engaged in the program
- 6 Celebrate accomplishments in achieving your treatment goals and share your success story

How will the Dialysis Peer benefit?

- + **Increases your knowledge of kidney failure treatment options and benefits** as your Transplant Trailblazer shares insights from their own experience receiving a transplant
- + **Encourages you to be an advocate for your own health** and empowers you to become aware of the steps required to reach transplant

How a Transplant Trailblazer Can Help You

Your Transplant Trailblazer can:

- Share knowledge and insights from their personal experience with receiving a transplant
- Be a strong source of support by listening to your concerns
- Refer you to members of your care team related to medical questions
- Provide encouragement and guidance

What your Transplant Trailblazer should **not** do for you:

- Give medical advice, like changing your diet or medication
- Invade privacy and personal boundaries or breach your confidentiality
- Handle grievances or complaints
- Borrow or loan money

Sample activities that you can do together:

- Visit your local library for social and educational events to remain active
- Team-up and share your experience at your facility lobby day
- Connect by phone to share times of joy or challenging days

- + **Reduces communication gaps with dialysis staff** by connecting you to the appropriate resources and experts when there are questions or concerns
- + **Provides emotional and social support** and encourages you to share your feelings and introduces you to a support system within your facility

Multiple Ways For Transplant Trailblazers and Dialysis Peers to Connect

Here are some tips for how to connect virtually and in-person. Each method offers unique features, pick which one works best for you!

Telephone & Text Messages

Exchange phone numbers! The telephone is a great way for Transplant Trailblazers and Dialysis Peers to connect with each other. Agree upon a time to talk with each other, decide who will call who, be sure to put a reminder on your calendar, and connect with each other at the scheduled appointment time.

Google Hangouts

The [Google Hangouts](#) app, available for both iOS and Android smartphones and mobile devices, is easy to install and use for free voice and video calling and video conferencing. It's available for Windows and Mac desktop and laptop computers as well, so it synchronizes across all your devices. You can even use Hangouts for texting.

Messenger Apps

Use instant messaging! Apps like [WhatsApp](#) or [Facebook Messenger](#) are mobile messaging apps used for instant messaging, sharing photos, videos, audio recordings and for group chats. The apps are usually free to download, can be used to communicate on your phone, but can also sync to your computer or tablet.

Google Duo

[Google Duo](#) is a free video chat mobile app that enables one-to-one video and voice calls across both iOS and Android devices. Simply download the Duo app and get started using video calling regardless of what kind of smart phone you have. It's also available via Google's chrome web browser on desktop and laptop computers.

FaceTime

[FaceTime](#) is perfect for seeing and hearing people over the phone. FaceTime is exclusive to Apple, so the Transplant Trailblazer will both need an iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, or Mac to use this service. The good thing about FaceTime is that you can use WiFi when calling, saving minutes on your cellular data plan.

In-Person

Talk with your dialysis facility and transplant center about when Transplant Trailblazers and Dialysis Peers can meet at the dialysis facility or even at the transplant center if the partners are both near the transplant center. Trailblazers and Dialysis Peers may also choose to meet at their local church, favorite kidney diet-friendly eatery, local community center, or a mutually agreed upon location.

Email

Exchange email addresses! Email is another way to stay in touch with each other, especially if you would like to share information and resources that can be found on the internet. Email is also a good way to connect with each other before or after your agreed upon time to meet.





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