

WORLD KIDNEY DAY – EMAIL TO MSP

EMAIL FROM PATIENTS/SUPPORTERS - ASKING MSP TO WRITE TO THE MINISTER

Subject: World Kidney Day – 10 March 2022 – better mental health support for PKD patients

Dear x

I am writing to you as my MSP to ask you to take action on mental health support for people with kidney disease ahead of **World Kidney Day** on Thursday 10 March 2022.

Add personal experience of kidney disease

There are around 3 million people living with kidney disease in the UK and every day 20 more people will develop kidney failure. An estimated 45,000 people die prematurely with kidney disease each year, and kidney disease inflicts a huge toll on those living with the condition and their families, both physically and emotionally.

70,000 of these are living with polycystic kidney disease or PKD, the world's most common inherited kidney disease, which causes kidneys to grow massively and painfully, resulting in kidney failure. In the UK, about 1 in 10 people on dialysis and 1 in 8 with a kidney transplant have PKD. It affects multiple family members and is present in children as well as adults.

A survey by Kidney Research UK in January 2022 found that over two-thirds (67%) of kidney patients have experienced symptoms of depression and more than a quarter (27%) have considered self-harm or suicide because of their kidney disease. Yet people with kidney disease struggle to access appropriate mental health services, with 68% of respondents saying they have not been offered any mental health support.

PKD patients and their family members are known to experience psychological distress such as anxiety and depression, even from early stages when physical symptoms are not present. One UK study reported clinically significant depression in 1 in 5 (22%) adult patients and two thirds (62%) felt 'genetic guilt' about passing PKD to their children. Yet many healthcare professionals underestimate the psychological impact and patients are not offered relevant support.

I would like you to write to the Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care Kevin Stewart MSP raising awareness of the impact of PKD on mental health and calling for everyone with PKD and kidney disease to have appropriate access to mental health support. I have suggested some wording for this letter below my signature.

I hope you can write to the Minister, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes.

Name

Address with postcode

Dear Minister

I am writing to you to ask what steps the Scottish Government is taking to support patients with PKD and kidney disease who require mental health support.

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I urge you to ensure patients diagnosed with kidney disease are routinely offered regular integrated psycho-social assessment and interventions from specialist renal psycho-social practitioners embedded within the multidisciplinary team (MDT).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

MSP