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## Introduction

This leaflet has been designed to provide information to patients who have a renal condition and who are living with frailty, and who require support from a social worker to help them to live their life as well as possible with their condition.

## What is a renal social support worker?

A renal social support worker is someone who can support you through changes in your life. This could be by helping you return to work or education or applying for government financial support or benefits. We recognise that you are an expert in your own life, and we will therefore listen to you and build on your existing resources to link you to the support you need. We would see what your strengths are and help you to become as independent as possible. The aim of a renal social support worker is to help you live a life that is not defined by your renal condition.

## How do I or a loved one contact a social worker?

The Imperial College Healthcare renal team has a renal social support worker who works four days a week. You can refer yourself or ask another member of staff, family member or health care professional to contact her on your behalf. You can refer by phone or email.

The support worker will work with you as long as you need her to. This could be

short term or longer term – depending on your situation.

## What sort of things can the social support worker help me with?

- Rehousing and homelessness
- Sickness and disability benefits
- Grants
- Problems with the home
- Social activities
- Carer advice and support
- Changes to the family role
- Immigration issues
- Advocacy with benefits or for social care
- Linking you into local services

## Will a social worker support my family?

The focus of the renal social support worker will be on you, as the patient. However, part of supporting you can also be supporting your family – she will discuss this with you and your family in more detail.

## How can my family support me?

Sometimes it can be hard for other people to understand how you feel, especially as renal disease is invisible. It is important to talk with your family as to how they can best support you. It can be hard to accept help. However, part of being a family or friend is also accepting help when you need it. This could be someone doing

some shopping for you, making a meal or helping you to make a phone call.

## I am feeling worried. What can I do?

Coming to terms with changes in your life may bring up mixed feelings. If you want to talk to someone about this and how it impacts on you, you can contact our counselling service on 020 33136620 or 020 33135341

## Further support

- Kidney Care UK - [www.kidneycareuk.org](http://www.kidneycareuk.org)
- West London Kidney Patients' Association – [www.westlondonkpa.org](http://www.westlondonkpa.org)
- Age UK - [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)
- The Silver Line - The free, 24-hour confidential helpline for older people. Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

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## How do I make a comment about my visit?

If you have any suggestions or comments about your care, please either speak to your GP, a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on 020 3312 7777 (10.00 -16.00, Monday to Friday).

You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net)

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY.

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: 020 3312 1337 / 1349

### Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: [imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

### Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)

**Renal social support for patients  
living with frailty**

**Information for patients, relatives  
and carers**

