



Media Release
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Patient Handbooks help guide the way

New format makes it easier for patients to glean information related to their current stage of living with kidney disease

MONTREAL – This morning, The Kidney Foundation of Canada celebrated the launch of its newly-revised and updated Patient Handbooks at Montreal Children’s Hospital, where renal professionals and families shared their positive experiences about using this free resource material to assist them with managing the complex diagnosis of a chronic disease.

“The Kidney Foundation of Canada is proud to launch the 5th edition of our patient handbook,” said Elizabeth Myles, National Executive Director of The Kidney Foundation of Canada. “The handbook is provided free of charge by the Foundation to all newly-diagnosed kidney patients across the country. It has been an important resource for Canadian kidney patients, helping them understand what it means to be diagnosed with kidney disease and navigate their options so they are able to make informed choices about their treatment.”

“The guide *Living with Kidney Disease* was a great help to understand our children's illness and to prepare us to live with this new reality,” according to Silène Beauregard, the mother of Marcelline and Hadrien.

Dr. Joanne Kappel, nephrologist and Physician of Record for the handbooks, said empowering patients with accurate and easy-to-understand information is important to a patient’s wellbeing as they learn to cope with a chronic disease. “Most people do not progress to end-stage kidney disease, especially if they are diagnosed early and are able to take steps to preserve their remaining kidney function. The handbook was split into two to prevent those in the early stages of kidney disease from being overwhelmed with information about treatment options intended for those in the later stages of kidney disease.”

Handbooks are typically distributed to patients through healthcare professionals working in renal units. Since 1993, when the patient information manuals became a core national program, it is estimated that the Foundation has distributed more than 80,000 of them across Canada.

“Feedback from Nephrology Social Workers across Canada is unanimous – The Kidney Foundation’s manual is an invaluable resource for kidney patients and their families,” says Michelle Jensen, President of the Canadian Association of Nephrology Social Workers (CANSW). “It is an integral part of renal education and an important tool for clinicians. Renal programs across the country provide a copy to each patient through renal clinics

and/or when patients begin dialysis. Clear and comprehensive, it is a patient-friendly introduction to kidney disease that supports education initiatives and serves as a helpful reference for patients and families.”

The Kidney Foundation of Canada’s *Living with Kidney Disease* patient handbook has been divided into two books for the latest edition: *Book One: Living with reduced kidney function* and *Book Two: Living with kidney failure*.

Book one, *Living with Reduced Kidney Function*, is intended for people whose primary care providers or nephrologists have identified kidney damage with either normal or reduced kidney function. It provides information on how kidneys work, and focuses on delaying the worsening of kidney function and preventing end-stage kidney disease through lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise and medication management.

Book Two, *Living with Kidney Failure*, is intended for patients with progressive kidney disease who need more information about treatment options. It provides information on dialysis, transplant, and conservative care. It also covers advance care planning and practical matters such as working, finance and insurance.

“We are grateful for the support of many philanthropic partners who came forward to support the revision of the handbooks and by doing so, extending their support to thousands of people who are newly-diagnosed with kidney failure every year,” said Ms. Myles.

– 30 –

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the national volunteer organization committed to reducing the burden of kidney disease through funding and stimulating innovative research; providing education and support; promoting access to high quality healthcare; and increasing public awareness and commitment to advancing kidney health and organ donation.

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