



The foundation of kidney care.

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World Kidney Day 2019

Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere

[Montreal, Quebec – March 1, 2019] – **FOUR MILLION CANADIANS** and 850 million people worldwide are now estimated to have kidney diseases from various causes. Globally, chronic kidney disease (CKD) causes at least 2.4 million deaths per year and is now the 6th fastest growing cause of death.

“Since 2008, the number of people living with kidney failure in Canada has grown by 35%,” said Elizabeth Myles, Executive Director of The Kidney Foundation of Canada. “It is the 10th leading non-accidental cause of mortality in Canada, so the situation remains alarming for Canadians.”

Despite the growing burden of kidney disease worldwide, kidney health disparity and inequity are still widespread, according to the World Kidney Day organization. CKD often arises from the social conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age including poverty, gender discrimination, lack of education, occupational hazards and pollution among others. Treatments for kidney disease are often inaccessible due to among others high out-of-pocket costs, lack of infrastructure and of specialized health care professionals.

Early diagnosis, prevention and delay of progression are sustainable options to reduce costs and consequences of kidney disease for individuals and countries. Yet, barriers to available, accessible, adequate and quality kidney care persist.

A person can lose more than 50% of their kidney function before symptoms appear. Currently, nearly 49,000 Canadians are being treated for kidney failure. Twenty-five percent of patients were late referrals, meaning they began dialysis fewer than 90 days after first seeing a nephrologist.

March is Kidney Health Month. In its 14th year of existence, World Kidney Day will be marked on March 14, 2019. This year’s theme, ‘*Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere*’, aims to raise awareness of the high and increasing burden of kidney diseases worldwide. The [Burden of Out-of-Pocket Costs for Canadians with Kidney Failure](#) has served as the cornerstone for many of The Kidney Foundation’s recent advocacy efforts by underscoring the financial hardships that kidney patients face every day, revealing that:

- More than 25% of patients saw their annual household income decrease by at least 40% since starting dialysis;
- 41% of them live below the Canadian Low Income Cut-Off, compared to 8-14% of the general population;
- 23% reported an annual income below \$20,000;
- The annual average out-of-pocket costs to patients related to dialysis ranged from \$1,400 to \$2,500.



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“These alarming statistics are a call to action. As a renal community, we need to find ways to prevent kidney disease through discovery,” added Canadian Society of Nephrology President, Dr. Deborah Zimmerman. “For all patients with established disease, we need access to better treatments that are associated with fewer complications and address patient priorities in renal care.”

About The Kidney Foundation of Canada

Excellent kidney health, optimal quality of life, and a cure for kidney disease - for over 50 years, this vision has guided The Kidney Foundation of Canada to be a collaborative, inventive and focused leader in the development of programs, services, research opportunities and awareness campaigns that have had a positive impact on the millions of Canadians living with, or at risk of developing kidney disease.

The Foundation's national research program has grown to become one of the most important sources of funding for scientists conducting kidney-related research. The Kidney Foundation of Canada is also committed to providing education, information and support about kidneys and kidney disease.

For more information, visit www.kidney.ca.

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