



Dr Ching gives an insight into the proper care of fistulas.

Educational forum for kidney patients and caregivers

MORE than 450 dialysis patients and their caregivers from Kedah, Perlis and Penang attended the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia's (NKF) 14th Annual Patient Forum held in Alor Star for the first time recently.

Initiated by the NKF welfare department, the forum is an avenue for dialysis patients and their caregivers to gain information on kidney disease as well as share their experiences in dealing with End Stage Kidney Disease (ESKD).

With a focus on enhancing patients' quality of life, the topics ranged from information and updates on kidney disease to tips on healthy habits, both physically and mentally.

The forum featured four nephrologists — Dr Faisal Azmee, Dr Ching Chen Hua, Dr Leong Chong Men and Dr Nor Fadhlina Zakaria.

Kicking off the session was Dr Faisal whose topic "Numbers in Dialysis — What Patients Should Pay Attention To?" aimed at creating awareness about the effectiveness of dialysis treatment from the perspective of haemoglobin, calcium, phosphate and potassium levels in the body.

Dr Ching educated patients and their caregivers on the care of fistulas to maintain optimal blood flow for dialysis treatment.

According to Dr Ching, the fistula is

crucial to haemodialysis as it is the best tool to connect the artery with a vein for dialysis treatment because it reduces the chance of skin infection, pumps blood at a higher speed and is more durable when compared to catheters.

"Some of the steps that should be taken before, during and after implanting fistulas are to avoid injecting the veins for blood collection and blood pressure examination," she added.

Dr Leong spoke about "Improving Survival in Dialysis Treatment" which focused on the way of prolonging quality of life as a dialysis patient, while Dr Nor Fadhlina's talk on "Supplements and Kidney Health" shed light on health

supplements and their impact on your kidneys.

She said consuming supplements without seeking doctor's advice beforehand could lead to heart and kidney diseases.

On hand to motivate patients and caregivers to lead a positive and healthier lifestyle was dietitian Kher Pui Ling, who gave tips on healthy eating and how to make good food choices.

Members of the public also had the chance to visit the NKF Public Education Department booths, which were set up on site, to learn more about the products and services offered, while NKF LifeCheck, the NKF's Mobile Health Screening Team, carried out health screenings.