

Dialysis patients find forum useful

Most were unaware about financial aid offered by government agencies

MORE than 300 dialysis patients attended the annual National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF) Patient Forum, held for the fifth year in Petaling Jaya.

Lourdes Edward together with his wife Peggy Chia, said this was their first patient forum. A former project coordinator, Lourdes said that he was diagnosed with End Stage Kidney Failure in July this year and is currently undergoing dialysis at the NKF Dialysis Centre in PJ.

"I found the forum very useful as I was unaware of the financial assistance being offered by the various government agencies and the many schemes available as money is an important consideration since I have three children, who are still studying, that I need to maintain and support," said Lourdes.

The forum on Role, Financial Assistance and Job Opportunities offered by Government and Non-Government Agencies for End Stage

Kidney Failure Patients was in response to the rising number of dialysis patients and the need for information on how to apply for financial assistance as many dialysis patients found the diagnosis of kidney failure shocking and unexpected.

As part of its ongoing efforts to educate dialysis patients on the various means of obtaining information on patient subsidy and financial assistance for dialysis as well as employment opportunities for those currently undergoing dialysis, NKF hoped the forum would motivate and assist dialysis patients in need of such information and help.

Various speakers from the Ministry of Health, Social Security Organisation (SOSCO) The National Welfare Foundation, The Social Welfare Department touched on the various allowances given out for those suffering from kidney disease.

NKF CEO Goh Seng Chuan in his speech said



Informative: Dialysis patients signing up for the forum.

that they were aware of the crucial role played by government agencies in providing financial assistance to those who cannot afford to pay the high cost of dialysis, hence they invited these agencies to inform the patients on the various financial schemes available.

At the forum, many patients came forward to clarify many issues related to the financial assistance they received. The speakers specifically advised those who were working not to stop working and to apply for the pension if they were eligible for it.

The dialysis patients were encouraged to work productively and contribute positively as Human Resource Department assistant

director Md Hatta bin Md Jauhar cited many cases where companies were so impressed with the productivity of their employees that they actually purchased dialysis machines to be used for the employees at the company premises.

NKF chairman of the board of managers S.S. Gill said that the government might consider giving free dialysis one day in Malaysia as it's done in countries such as America. However, since it's yet to be available here, he encouraged patients to continue working, lessen their financial burden if they do qualify for financial assistance from government agencies.