A lonely battle

Man with chronic kidney disease needs kidney transplant.

LIFE does not always go the way we plan. This is the harsh truth that Sentul-born Valentine Savariar has had to face.

In the 1980s, this eighth child in a family of nine siblings set off to London to pursue his ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) qualification.

Upon returning to Malaysia, he started a costume jewellery shop in Central Market, Kuala Lumpur.

After about 20 years, he ran into some financial difficulties, and was forced to give up his business. He then resorted to selling his costume jewelry by the roadside along Central Market. For a while, things seemed pleasant.

One day, when he was around 50 years old, Valentine felt dizzy and went to Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL) for treatment.

He was diagnosed with hypertension and diabetes, and prescribed with the necessary medication.

However, in July 2014, Valentine experienced breathing difficulties and was unable to walk because fluid was oozing from his thighs.

His sister-in-law rushed him to HKL and he underwent several medical tests. The hospital then revealed to Valentine and his sister-in-law that he had chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Upon hearing this, his whole world collapsed. He was required to undergo dialysis treatments at Hospital Selayang, Selangor. Subsequently, he was informed by the hospital that he had to find a dialysis centre for his treatment.

As his finances were scarce, Dr Bee Boon Cheak from Selayang arranged for him to dialyse at Putrajaya Dialysis NKF-Rotary Damansara.

However, since the distance to and from his home in Kepong, Selangor, to the dialysis centre took more than three hours, it became increasingly taxing on Valentine.

He requested for a transfer to Putrajaya Dialysis NKF-Nanyang, which is closer to his home, and with the help of the centre manager, has been receiving his treatment there since September 2014.

As a result of his illness, bachelor Valentine's relationship with his siblings and other family members has become very strained. His friends have also turned their backs on him, as he is unable to socialise like he used to, due to his increasingly restricted movements.

Therefore, when he is not dialysing in the day, he continues to sell his costume jewellery. He knows that it will not be too long before this too becomes too strenuous for him.

A kidney transplant is the best long-term option to Valentine's problems, but this remains, at best, wishful thinking.

Despite Valentine's dire condition, he remains hopeful that one day things will look up.

Like him, thousands of kidney patients are praying for a suitable organ donor.

Members of the public can help alleviate this situation by contacting the National Transplant Resource Centre (NTRC) in Kuala Lumpur for more information or to pledge their organs at 03-2681 0681/2 or 1800-88-9080 (toll free); or emailing ntrc@moh.gov.my.

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Malaysia is a non-profit charitable organisation dedicated to helping Malaysians suffering from end stage kidney failure who lack access to or cannot afford dialysis treatment. NKF currently has over 1,500 dialysis patients receiving subsidised dialysis treatment in 27 dialysis centres nationwide. – Bernama