

4,000 diagnosed with kidney failure each year

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PETALING JAYA: Kidney failure is increasing at an alarming rate with over 4,000 Malaysians being diagnosed every year, said the National Kidney Foundation (NKF).

Its vice-chairman Goh Seng Chuan said that 14 out of every 100,000 people now have kidney failure, adding that 58% of such cases were due to diabetes and high blood pressure.

"It is a lifestyle disease. Although more people know about the dangers of drinking soft drinks or smoking, they still do it," said Goh.

Kidney failure or End Stage Kidney (Renal) Disease (ESRD) happens when a person's kidneys loses the ability to remove excess fluid, minerals and wastes from the blood, resulting in patients requiring dialysis.

Goh said there are around 26,159 people undergoing dialysis treatment nationwide as of March this year, which is a 33.6% increase from 2007.

"NKF currently has approximately 1,500 dialysis patients receiving subsidised dialysis treatment in 27 dialysis centres nationwide and the numbers are growing. Contributions from the public to help us provide dialysis to poor patients are welcome," said Goh after receiving 10 dialyser reprocessor machines from the Berjaya Cares Foundation yesterday.

The machines, worth RM320,000, will be placed at NKF centres in Taiping, Klang, Kluang, Kuching, Petaling Jaya, Johor Baru and Kuala Terengganu.

Berjaya Group Berhad executive director Nerine Tan said the group has been supporting NKF for 17 years.

"With increased demand for haemodialysis and rising medical costs, we hope our contribution to NKF will cater to the growing demand from end-stage kidney patients," Tan said in a statement.

A typical dialysis patient requires three treatments each week, which costs RM50 per session (if subsidised)," said Goh.