

Your Kidney Transplant Team

Transplant Nephrologist

A doctor who is an expert in kidney disease and transplant. Your transplant nephrologist is responsible for determining your medical need for a transplant, managing your transplant-related medical needs before transplant, participating in your care during your transplant admission, and seeing you during clinic appointments following your discharge.

Transplant Surgeon

A doctor who performs kidney and/or pancreas surgery. Your surgeon is responsible for evaluating your medical condition in preparation for surgery, discussing the transplant with you, performing the surgery, monitoring your immunosuppressive medications while you are inpatient, and providing post-operative care for a defined period of time following surgery.

Triage Coordinator

A registered nurse who is responsible for managing your new referral for a kidney or pancreas transplant. The triage coordinator will work with you to ensure a timely evaluation appointment is available to you and that you are prepared for your transplant journey to begin.

Transplant Coordinator (Pre-Transplant)

A registered nurse who is responsible for managing your case to ensure you are approved for transplant. Transplant coordinators are the primary link between you and your doctors through the process before transplant. Close communication with your transplant coordinator is very important to getting listed, maintaining your listing and being transplanted.

Transplant Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner

Physician Assistants (PA) and Nurse Practitioners (NP) are licensed practitioners who work closely with the nephrologists and surgeons to provide medical care to you before and after transplant. They conduct physical examinations during the pre-transplant evaluation and waiting time. They also follow up with you in post-transplant clinic under the supervision of the nephrologists or surgeon.

Transplant Social Worker

A licensed social worker who helps you and your family understand and cope with a variety of issues related to your transplant experience such as emotional, family, financial and work concerns. The transplant social worker is available to help you at any point in your transplant care. Transplant social workers also provide a link to resources in your local community.

Living Donor Advocate (LDA)

Team member responsible to meet with potential donors during the evaluation process to represent, advise and protect the living donor, while promoting the best interests of the living donor. They provide education on organ donation, ensure the patient can make an informed decision, ensure they are free from pressure in making their decision, participate in team discussion about living donors, and are available to donors throughout the donation process and beyond. The LDA has the authority to exclude any living donor if they believe donation is not in the best interest of the potential donor. They do not participate in the care of transplant recipients.

Transplant Financial Coordinator

Financial coordinators work with you and your family to help you understand the various financial aspects of transplant. They work with your insurance carrier to verify coverage and help in getting prior authorization for transplant services. They also work with patients with limited insurance coverage to explore other funding opportunities and alert the transplant team of the situation.

Transplant Dietitian or Registered Dietitian

The registered dietitian is your kidney nutrition expert who will meet with you to assess your nutritional status and help you with meeting your lifestyle goals. To keep you healthy before and after your kidney transplant, the dietitian is available to discuss a variety of topics such as kidney diet, weight management, diabetes, cholesterol or blood pressure.

Clinical Research Team

The clinical research team manages the clinical research studies designed to improve the understanding of transplant and enhance the outcomes for all patients. Research staff responsibilities include identifying eligible patients, informing patients about research options, enrolling patients in research studies, collecting research data and coordinating research care. The research team works closely with the clinical team to provide patients access to cutting edge therapies before they are available everywhere.

Inpatient Nurse Educator

A registered nurse who works with you during your transplant admission, teaching you and your family about your medicines, wound care, lab schedule and your clinic follow-up plan after discharge.

Transplant Pharmacist

A pharmacist who has knowledge, training and experience in transplant medicines is available to work with you, your family and the rest of the transplant team with regard to managing your transplant medicines during your entire transplant journey.

Post-Transplant Nurse

A registered nurse (RN) who specializes in kidney and pancreas disease, and more specifically, in patients with kidney and pancreas transplants. An RN assists the team in providing your post-transplant care. The RN maintains medical information, monitors labs and medicines and works closely with the transplant doctors on patient care issues. You may have different transplant nurses during the different phases of care post-transplant.

Primary Care Physician (PCP) or Family Physician

A primary care physician is a title used by insurance companies to identify the doctor who is responsible to provide you general medical care and to authorize patient referrals for specialty care.

Local or Referring Nephrologist

The local nephrologist is the nephrologist you see near your home. This is often the doctor that you saw before transplant. You will continue to follow with a local nephrologist after transplant. For more information on the importance of having a local nephrologist, please refer to page 38 in the Resources section.

Interruption of Services

In the unlikely event that a change occurs in the transplant center's ability to perform transplant or living donation, including CMS or OPTN inactivation, an extended period of unavailability of key medical or surgical staff, or internal or external emergency, limiting the center's ability to accept organs or perform organ transplant or living donation, all patients within any phase of transplant, will be notified.

