

December 2014



Quality Insights Renal Network 3

Serving New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands



*Kidneys R Us*

FROM THE  
QIRN3 PATIENT ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

## Kidney Transplant New Allocation System

The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), which manages the national transplant system, has approved a new allocation system for kidney transplant from deceased donors. This new system begins in December 2014 and replaces the previous allocation system which has been in place since 1988.

The revised system is a result of years of review and consensus-building among transplant professionals and people who have personal experience with donation and transplantation. It should help more people have longer function with their transplanted kidney. It should also help to shorten the waiting time for patients who are hard to match with most donated kidneys.

### What will change? What will stay the same?

Many people will not see any major change. The time you spend waiting for a kidney is still a major factor in matching. You **will not** lose credit for any time you have already spent waiting. If you began dialysis before you were listed for a transplant, your transplant waiting time will be backdated to your first dialysis date.

Young patients and others who are in good health while on dialysis will be allocated kidneys that are expected to function for a long time after the transplant.

Groups of people who are hard to match with kidneys, based on their blood type or immune sensitivity, will also get additional priority.

Every kidney offered for transplant will have a Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI) score. This score is associated with how long the kidney is likely to function when compared to other kidneys. The KDPI score is calculated based on facts about the donor

such as age, height, weight, ethnicity, cause of death, history of high blood pressure or diabetes, exposure to the hepatitis C virus and serum creatinine.

Each kidney candidate will get an individual Estimated Post-Transplant Survival (EPTS) score. This score is associated with how long the candidate will need a functioning kidney transplant when compared with other candidates. The EPTS is calculated based on facts about the candidate that affect how long the candidate is likely to need a kidney, such as age, length of time spent on dialysis, having received a previous transplant of any organ and current diagnosis of diabetes.

The kidneys that are expected to last the longest will first be offered to patients likely to need a transplant the longest. If these kidneys are not accepted for any of these patients, they will be offered to any other person on the waiting list who would match those kidneys.

Kidneys that are expected to function for a shorter amount of time than others may best be used to help candidates who are less able to stay on dialysis for a long time.

Candidates who have developed immune system sensitivity due to a previous transplant, blood transfusions or even from pregnancy will get some priority for kidneys they aren't likely to reject. The priority will be based on the severity of the sensitivity.

Candidates who have type B blood will also get some priority for donor kidneys with a "subtype" of type A blood that allows them to match a type B candidate.

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In each of these cases, if the donor kidney is not used for these candidates, it will be offered to other patients on the waiting list. The goal is to encourage use of donated kidneys by finding suitable patients as quickly as possible.

The new system has been carefully designed to help people who need more access to kidney offers without significantly affecting the needs of others.

People who have the longest potential need for a transplant, and those who have been hard to match under the current system, will get more priority in the new system. Since they make up a fairly small proportion of everyone needing a kidney transplant, the effect on the vast majority of candidates should not be very large. In addition, the new system should provide more transplant opportunities, so that everyone has a better chance to be transplanted.

**If you are already listed for transplant, you won't need to be re-evaluated or re-listed just because the system is changing.** Your transplant program may need to contact you for additional information, but only to make sure everything is accurate and up to date in the new system. For additional information about your specific circumstances, contact your transplant center.

As always, stay in touch with your medical team and follow their instructions and recommendations for your care. Feel free to discuss with your medical team whether you will receive different priority under the new system, as well as the types of kidney offers that would be best for you.

Excerpted from:

[www.unos.org/docs/Kidney\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.unos.org/docs/Kidney_Brochure.pdf)

To file a Grievance Regarding your Dialysis Care

please contact QIRN3

Cranbury Gates Office Park

109 South Main Street, Suite 21

Cranbury, NJ 08512

Phone: 888-877-8400 (toll-free)

Fax: 609-490-0835

Email: [qirn3@nw3.esrd.net](mailto:qirn3@nw3.esrd.net)

We're on the  
Web!  
[www.qirn3.org](http://www.qirn3.org)

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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## New Year's Thoughts

### New Year's Toast

Here's to the new year...

May it bring more joy and success

And less grief and regret.

To our dreams...

May we never stop believing in them

And taking the actions that will make them a reality.

To our friends, loved ones, healthcare providers...

May we take the time to let them know

How much it means to us

To have them in our lives.

Let us encourage more and criticize less,

Give more and need less.

And whenever we can,

Let us create harmony and peace.

To new beginnings...

Let us start fresh, right now,

To make this the very best year ever.

A very Happy New Year to all of you!

By Joanna Fuchs

[www.poemsource.com](http://www.poemsource.com)

From all of the patients and family members on the Patient Advisory Committee (PAC), we wish you the happiest and safest of holiday seasons and the very best the New Year has to offer. May you be surrounded by family and friends as you share the joys of the season.

**JOIN THE PAC TODAY!**

The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) for QIRN3 consists of dialysis patients and those who have received transplants. The committee meets quarterly to discuss issues relevant to ESRD patients. The PAC members have a genuine concern for quality of care issues and encourage patients to be involved in their healthcare. They are willing to share skills and experience with others. Each facility is encouraged to have a PAC representative. Talk to your social worker to volunteer!

Call toll free 1-888-877-8400 to join the PAC.