

March 2016 - Social Work Month

There are people in every community that go above and beyond their work to make a change in the lives of others. These people may come from different backgrounds, but many times they are known as social workers.

Renal social workers are vital members of the facility's health care team, because they have the knowledge to help patients meet their fullest potential.

It is not rare that at the top of the list of goals for a renal social worker you may find they want to help patients:

- ✓ Understand their treatment routine
- ✓ Cope with the stressors and challenges related with kidney disease
- ✓ Achieve well-being to better manage their care
- ✓ Enable communication between the patient, the family, and the health care team

The social worker is an advocate for the patient who sees the strengths of each person. Patients trust the social worker with issues, concerns and support. It is no wonder that this year's Social Work Month theme is **"Forging Solutions out of Challenges"**.

Will you join your Social Worker in helping to develop solutions out of challenges?

If so, we encourage you to speak with your social worker and ask them how you can help.

Here are some things you can do at your facility to help:

- Welcome new patients
- Help staff give out information
- Mentor or coach other patients by helping them understand handouts
- Help staff with lobby day education
- Work with staff to start patient and family groups
- Start a newsletter for the facility or write/find articles or poems for the facility newsletter
- Assist staff in planning of patient and staff events like picnics, holiday parties, and art shows
- Help decorate the facility for holidays and events
- Help patients understand how to work with staff to fix problems (guidance provided by staff)
- Make a patient bulletin board and/or activity calendar
- Organize team events like a Kidney Walk or Summer Picnic Day

