

OUTReach

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In Sickness and Health, the Vow to Love Seeks Quality Care

It's been said that love is not about how many days, months or years you have been together, but how you love each other every single day. The longer you've known someone, the more in tune you are to his or her needs. And that's certainly true for Patti and Jim Wilborn, who will celebrate their 41st anniversary this April.

Even though it has been more than four decades since the two met, you can still tell how deeply Patti and Jim care for each other. Over the last 40 years, the two have built a life and raised a daughter together. Jim says he still remembers meeting Patti and vowing, if anything ever happened to this woman, I am willing to spend the rest of my life taking care of her. Thirty-seven years later, that vow was put to the test.

"One of the first things I thought of when I was diagnosed with kidney disease was that promise he made to me," Patti said. "And I was comforted knowing that he wouldn't leave me."

In 2013, illness struck. Patti was overcome with mini strokes and a variety of problems began to develop with her kidneys, thyroid, and ears. In a matter of months, she went from working and living her life normally to starting dialysis and being unable to work any longer.



Jim and Patti Wilborn

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The Vow to Love, continued

During this time, Jim was reminded of simple truths.

"You have givers and you have takers in this life. In family, whoever has the opportunity to be a caretaker, there is no question asked, you just do it," he said.

Jim shared that in all those years of marriage, he never felt as close to Patti as he does now. As her caretaker, he takes a personal responsibility in making sure she receives the best care possible. After a few years of dialysis in Scottsboro, Alabama, Jim felt like Patti was not receiving the quality of care she needed. He began to search the internet for a provider that would improve her clinical care. He found Dialysis Clinic, Inc., and was drawn to their nonprofit mission.

Already contemplating a move from Alabama to Pennsylvania to be closer to family, Jim emailed DCI to learn more about the mission. He was reassured that the "care of the patient" allowed DCI to care for someone on a more personal level. Once the Wilborns moved to Pennsylvania, they scheduled a tour of the DCI Monroeville facility to see if this new provider would be a good fit for them. Right away, they felt at home.

"The DCI team was very helpful right off the bat and they continue to be," Jim shared.

When Jim asked Patti if the move from Alabama to Pennsylvania was worth it, she said yes. Patti said that the difference between dialysis providers was daylight and dark and can be seen and felt in the little things.

"After I start dialysis, the nurses dim the lights during treatment and adjust the alarms on the machines to a softer setting. And, I have a chair warmer. These

things have helped to make me more comfortable," said Patti.

However, it was not just about comfort for Patti. She and Jim knew that an active medical team with an individualized approach to care was an important aspect necessary to improve her quality of life.

"The individualized care Patti has received at DCI Monroeville has improved her quality of life greatly," Jim said.

"The dietitian, nurses and patient care technicians are great. The social worker has helped us with the financial cost of prescriptions. We are so appreciative of the employees and their commitment to DCI's mission."

These days, Jim and Patti spend their time with close friends and loved ones. They enjoy watching the birds come to their bird feeders and walking outside in nature. Most of all, they enjoy spending time with each other.

"I love her outlook on life. Every time she smiles, she lights up the world. We are Yin and Yang, and she has always been my constant in a world of chaos," Jim said.

"And I love his persistence and compassion the most. Of course, I have also always been attracted to men with dark hair and light eyes!" Patti teased.

Forty years of marriage is not without a few imperfections. Perhaps that is what makes each couple's journey uniquely beautiful. Jim's willingness to research and find the best treatment for Patti's health shows the true meaning of love and commitment. •

Are You the “Perfect Match” for Somebody?

Below, we’ve answered a few frequently asked questions about living kidney donation.

Organ donation is offering the gift of life.

It can come in the form of a living related organ donation, a living non-related organ donation or a deceased organ donation. Living organ donors face the unique advantage of seeing their gift in use.

Can I live with one kidney? Yes. Once your kidney is removed, your other kidney will compensate for the donated kidney.

What is the recovery time? The hospital stay is 2-3 days. Full recovery for a kidney donor is usually 4-6 weeks.

Is there a financial burden? What financial resources are available to help me?

The transplant recipient’s insurance will cover your medical expenses as a donor including evaluation, surgery, and follow-up appointments. The Affordable Care Act has made it illegal for health insurance to refuse to cover you or charge you more for a condition. You should speak with your transplant coordinator for more information.

What if I feel compelled to give, but I don’t know who to give to? Talk with a transplant coordinator about altruistic living kidney donation, or non-directed donation.

What if the person I want to donate to is not a match? Talk with a transplant coordinator about paired living kidney donation. You may still be able to donate and help your recipient.

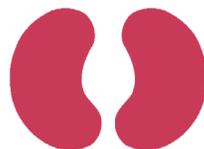
What if my remaining kidney fails? Though extremely rare, if you are a kidney donor and your remaining kidney fails later in life, for any reason, you can be moved to the top of the transplant waiting list.



Eileen W. smiles with her living kidney donor in 2016.

**15
per day**

Since 2012, there have been nearly 6,000 living donor transplants per year in the US. (UNOS, 2016)



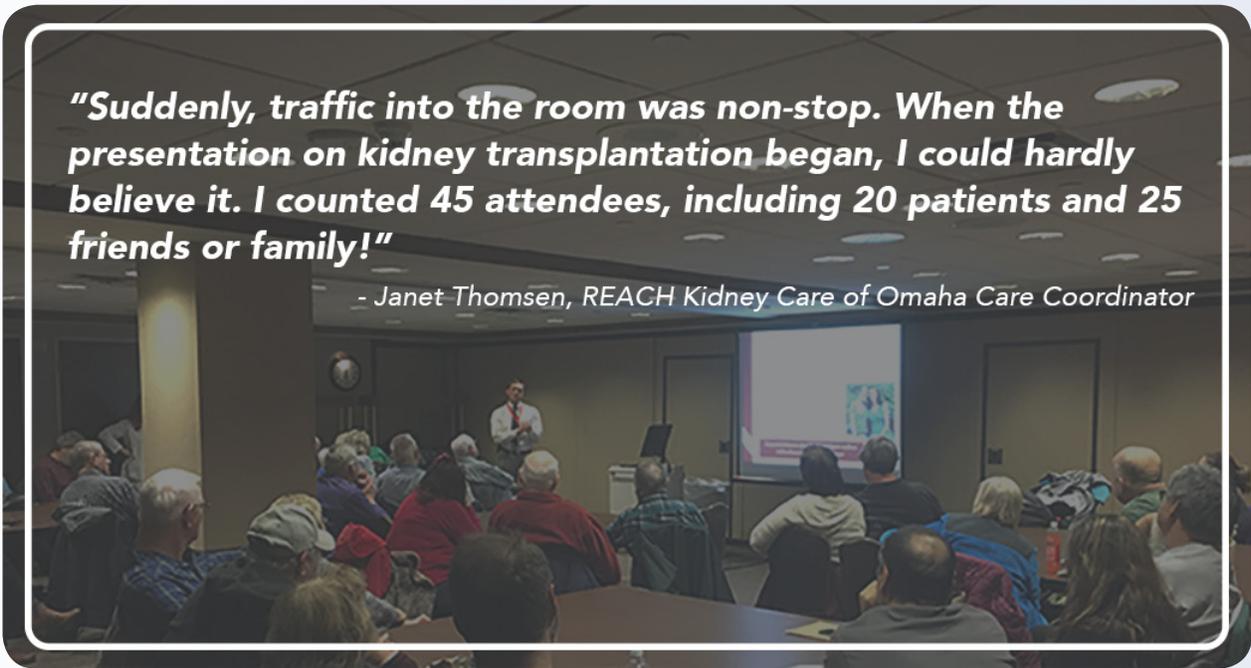
Paired kidney donation “involves two pairs of living kidney donors & transplant candidates who ‘trade’ donors so that each candidate receives a kidney from a donor with a compatible blood type.” (UNOS, 2016)

**More
than 108
per week**

To date there has been more than 139,600 living donor transplants. (UNOS, 2017) 3

"Suddenly, traffic into the room was non-stop. When the presentation on kidney transplantation began, I could hardly believe it. I counted 45 attendees, including 20 patients and 25 friends or family!"

- Janet Thomsen, REACH Kidney Care of Omaha Care Coordinator



Transplant Education Brings Hope to Standing-Room Only Crowd

Studies have shown that for many patients with kidney failure, a transplant provides not just longevity that may be unattainable on dialysis, but also the best quality of life. Yet, the Living Kidney Donors Network shares that the average wait time for a deceased kidney donor can average 5 – 10 years. With the knowledge that transplantation is an ideal, yet limited, treatment option, how do patients take advantage of this method?

It starts with a commitment to increasing the transplant rate. In June, DCI committed to quadrupling the current transplant rate for patients with kidney disease. In addition, DCI's chronic kidney disease program, REACH Kidney Care, encouraged care coordinators around the country to seek additional opportunities to provide patients with transplant resources.

In Omaha, Janet Thomsen, RN, REACH Kidney Care CKD Coordinator, found the Nebraska Medicine Kidney/Pancreas transplant team willing to join efforts.

"When I described to the team the goals of REACH Kidney Care and DCI's commitment to increasing kidney transplantation across the U.S., without hesitation, Nebraska Medicine Transplant suggested an educational event for REACH participants and their friends and family," shared Janet. "We quickly scheduled a space at the Nebraska Medicine Campus that could accommodate up to 45 patients and guests."

The partnership required collaboration among several individuals, including: Victoria Hunter, RN, Kidney/Pancreas Transplant Manager; Gina Rau, RN, Living Donor Coordinator; Stephanie Lewis, Physician Outreach Liaison; and Clifford Miles, MD, Director of Kidney/Pancreas Transplant at Nebraska Medicine.

With 45 seats available, Janet was determined to fill each one. She identified 46 REACH participants with a glomerular filtration rate (GFR) below 30, meaning they were in the later stages of kidney disease and a higher risk for kidney failure.

Story continued on next page.

Transplant Education (continued)

Janet mailed invitations to each person emphasizing the unique opportunity for transplant education.

On December 6, the REACH/Nebraska Medicine: An Evening of Transplant presentation took place. Janet arrived early to find there were already 11 REACH patients and family members in the designated meeting room.

"Suddenly, traffic into the room was non-stop," Janet reflected. "When the presentation began, I could hardly believe it. I counted 45 attendees, including 20 patients and 25 friends or family. Every patient that had received their reminder phone call was there. It was standing-room only."

"The presenters did an outstanding job," Janet said. "The patients and their family members asked many insightful questions, and the transplant team remained available until after the last question was answered."

Due to the significant response to the program, Nebraska Medicine offered to host the educational event for REACH participants on a quarterly basis.

"The first collaboration program between REACH and the Nebraska Medicine Kidney Transplant program was an overwhelming success. It was a great privilege to work with Janet on the project. She shares our 'patient first' passion," said Victoria Hunter, RN, K/P Transplant Manager. "The transplant team looks forward to working with REACH and Janet to educate people about transplant opportunities in the future."

The organizers of the event wanted the attendees to receive meaningful information that would impact their lives. Janet reported that one attendee leaving the event gave her a gentle hug. The attendee said, "Thank you so much for all you've done for me, and thank you for encouraging me to come to this tonight. You gave me hope."

It is the hope for a better future and the knowledge of how to achieve it that has the power to change a patient's life. With providers working toward this goal, patients are sure to benefit. •

in her own words...



"Fourteen years ago, I became a dialysis nurse. Somewhere along the way, I had forgotten why I had become a nurse in the first place. I forgot what it felt like to go above and beyond and make a difference in someone's life. Earlier this week, I entered in to a conversation with a patient who has been newly diagnosed with skin cancer. We began talking about her family, relationships and traditions. I formed a genuine connection with her that I have not had with a patient in a long time. Driving home that night, I cried happy tears. **Becoming a dialysis care coordinator has helped me put my heart and soul back into patient care.**"

- Amanda Scanlan, RN, BSN
Music City Kidney Care Alliance

TIPS TO KEEP YOUR HEART & KIDNEYS STRONG!



This Heart Health Month, Tarek Darwish, MD, nephrologist with Kansas City Kidney Specialists, offers advice to help you keep your heart and kidneys healthy:

BREAK UP WITH TOBACCO

"Smoking is the #1 preventable cause of death in the US," Dr. Darwish said. Break up with tobacco. It can be hard, but taking steps now to end your love affair with tobacco will improve your heart, kidney and lung health tremendously. Talk to your nephrologist or a REACH Kidney Care coordinator to learn more about getting the support you need to end this relationship.

GO AHEAD, COZY UP TO THE NUMBERS

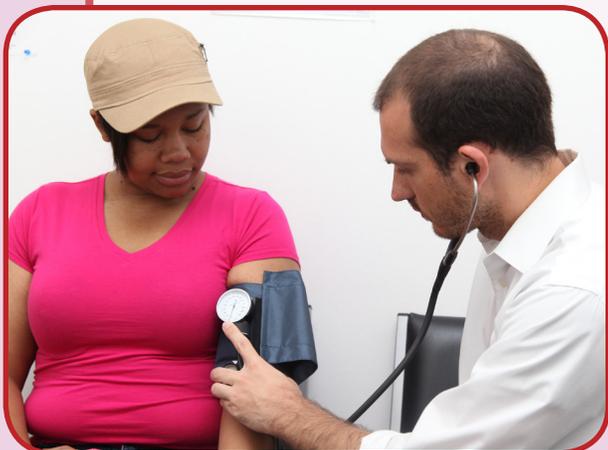
"High cholesterol, high blood sugar and high blood pressure can all affect your heart and kidney health," Dr. Darwish said. Many times, we want to ignore or distance ourselves from the lab results that seem difficult to understand. Understanding your labs and test results will help you to better understand how to manage your health. So, cozy up to the idea of getting familiar with your labs.

THE NEW SPEED DATING INCLUDES TENNIS SHOES

"Studies show that walking not only benefits your physical health, but also your mental health," Dr. Darwish explained. When you feel great, it shows! Why not commit to incorporating exercise into your daily routine? Think of it as speed-dating, with three 10-minute walks to get started. Take one 10-minute walk after breakfast, before lunch and before dinner. You'll be surprised how much this simple exercise can benefit your mental and physical health."

LOVE THE ONE THAT'S GOOD FOR YOU

"Eating salty foods will increase your blood pressure. High blood pressure forces your heart and kidneys to work harder to clean your blood," Dr. Darwish shared. We often desire the salty treats that just aren't good for us. You've got to accept that your love of sodium increases your risk of heart disease. It's time to love what's good for you. Start by taking small steps: avoid fast food, lose the table salt, and begin using fresh herbs and low-sodium dressings. Herbs and low-sodium options may not be your first love, but they can become your true love.



It's important to get your blood pressure checked regularly to make sure your heart and kidneys are in tip-top shape!

Here, a Nashville resident participates in a free blood pressure screening.

A Message from REACH MTM

Heart disease is common for people who have kidney disease. Taking medication for heart disease can improve your health outcomes and prevent hospitalizations. However, not all heart-related medications are alike. The heart healthy medications prescribed to you target specific heart-related diseases such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Below are a few points to remember regarding your heart medications:



FACT SHEET: Heart Disease Medications

Medication Class	Common Drugs in Category	Common Side Effects	Tell your doctor if...
Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors (ACEi)	ACE-inhibitors: Lisinopril (Zestril), Quinapril (Accupril), Captopril (Capoten), Enalapril (Vasotec), Ramipril (Alteco), Benazepril (Lotensin)	Low blood pressure, dizziness, headache, dry cough	Dizziness or fainting, signs of high potassium (weakness, irregular heartbeat, numbness or tingling, feeling of passing out), cough that does not go away
Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs)	ARBs: Losartan (Cozaar), Valsartan (Diovan), Irbesartan (Avapro), Olmesartan, Candesartan, Telmisartan		
Beta Blockers	Non-Selective: Propranolol (Inderal), Carvedilol (Coreg), Labetalol (Trandate), Sotalol Selective: Metoprolol succinate/tartrate (Toprol XL, Lopressor), Atenolol, Bisoprolol	Non-Selective: Fatigue, Diarrhea, Dizziness Selective: Slow heart rate, Dizziness, Fatigue	Very slow heart rate (less than 50 BPM), feeling cold, very bad dizziness or feeling of passing out, low mood (depression), shortness of breath, a big weight gain, swelling in arms and legs

- Contact your doctor or call emergency services if you experience signs of an allergic reaction (hives, trouble breathing, itching)
- Take a missed dose as soon as you remember
- If it is close to the time of your next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at your normal time
- Do not take two doses (or extra doses) at the same time



On the [MTM website \(www.REACHMTM.org/heart-medication\)](http://www.REACHMTM.org/heart-medication), we provide information about common heart-related medications, how they work, and side effects you should discuss with your doctor. If you have any further questions, please contact your pharmacist, doctor or email REACH MTM at info@REACHMTM.org

Looking for a heart healthy dish?

Tuna is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids. Try our baked tuna recipe below!

Directions

- Preheat oven 350°F
- Coat baking dish with non-stick cooking spray.
- In a large bowl combine tuna, onion, pepper, pimento and mayonnaise.
- Place tuna mixture in baking dish. Sprinkle with bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese.
- Bake 20 minutes (or until thoroughly heated) and topping is lightly brown.

Potassium: 243

Sodium: 160

Phosphorus: 457

Ingredients

- 14 oz. canned tuna in water, no salt, drained
- 2/3 c. chopped onion
- 1/4 c. green pepper diced
- 1/4 c. canned pimento
- 1/2 c. mayonnaise
- 2 T. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 c. plain bread crumbs
- non-stick cooking spray



FIND THIS RECIPE AND MORE AT
WWW.DCIINC.ORG/RECIPES

Smiling through the Storm: a Positive Approach to Chronic Illness

The fact is that 1 in 3 US adults is at risk for developing kidney disease. Yet being diagnosed with kidney disease is typically a surprise. Chronic kidney disease often goes undetected until the final stage that results in kidney failure and the need for dialysis treatment.

"You are always surprised when someone tells you news like that," said Joe Giuliano, transplant recipient and former DCI North Hills patient, referring to the moment his doctor told him his kidneys weren't functioning properly. "After my annual physical, the doctor said it looked like I had diabetes. I thought, no way. He went on to tell me that I needed to see a nephrologist because my kidneys were failing. I was shocked. I didn't have any symptoms."



Kidney disease is often referred to as the "silent killer" and Joe's reaction is very common among people facing kidney disease. Usual reactions to a diagnosis of kidney disease include shock, denial and depression. One study found that nearly 40% of dialysis patients reported experiencing depression after beginning treatments. It is normal to experience a range of emotions during this transition. Yet you do not have to manage this alone. Your care team is available to provide resources for the emotional and physical support you need.

Talk to a social worker at your clinic or at REACH Kidney Care to learn more. In the meantime, take a look at the tips below to find hope amid life-changing news.

Learning is step one. Learning more about your disease and your care is one of the best ways to regain control of your health and build a foundation for a positive attitude. The more you know, the easier it is to make a plan for your future.

In addition to physician's advice, you may want to explore patient organizations for insights. Check out the American Association of Kidney Patients, Renal Support Network and the National Kidney Foundation.

"I listened to what my doctor said. The more I learned, the easier it was for me to accept that dialysis was a means to an end. I decided dialysis is what I would do while I waited on a transplant. I had my fistula placed early. I then worked on staying healthy so that I would remain transplant eligible," advised Joe.

Then take one step at a time...day by day. One way that Joe coped with his kidney disease was that he didn't resist the changes his doctors asked him to make, he accepted and implemented them. "Dialysis will require lifestyle changes. You'll need to take certain medicines. You'll have doctor's appointments and dialysis treatments. It's okay. Just take it day by day," said Joe. Starting dialysis means you may have to limit certain foods and drinks. You may have to take blood pressure or heart medication. Remember, you are in control of your health.

Remember to live for what you love and be thankful. Joe loves to travel. With condos in Las Vegas and Florida, Joe can decide one morning to be in a sunnier spot and be there by dinner. And yet, during the first year of dialysis, Joe didn't travel. "The nurses kept saying I could, but I was too nervous," said Joe.

"Would the staff in another dialysis center do things the same way? Would I get the same care? I didn't know. So for a year, I didn't go," he continued.

Then Joe remembered that he was dialyzing to live, not living for dialysis. Joe let a social worker help him plan a trip. Soon he was back on the road again and smiling.

"Happiness for me is going where I want, when I want," said Joe. "Those nurses, they are angels of mercy. They are the most loving, caring and thoughtful people in the world. I'm so thankful for their help."

Your doctors and nurses want to help you live, not just provide a treatment. What are you not doing today because of kidney disease that you would like to do? What makes you smile? Work with your care team to find a way to get your smile back. Then... remember to say thank you.

Finding reasons to say "thank you" is proven to increase positivity. A Harvard study reports, "Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships."

Feelings of depression, sadness and frustration are normal. The emotions that you are experiencing are in direct response to the changes in your life. However, these feelings can be addressed and managed. Through learning, adjusting to the new changes and finding gratitude, you can live your best life in spite of kidney disease. •

From the desk of a

DCi Social Worker

Life will inevitably change when you are diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. Along with this change can come many questions, conflicting emotions, treatment options to consider, and difficult choices to make regarding the next steps in your healthcare. Often, people with kidney disease experience anxiety or depression after their diagnosis. I find some patients dismiss these feelings because a stigma exists that if someone experiences depression that they may be "weak." Yet depression can easily develop when faced with any chronic illness or hardship in life. Depression is also something you can work through and improve-- it is not a diagnosis you're stuck with. Mental health matters and your social worker is there, first and foremost, to help you navigate any mental health issues along your kidney disease journey with compassion and without judgment.

- Jimmy Smith, LMSW
REACH Kidney Care Social Worker

What's New with REACH Kidney Care?

2016 was an exciting year for REACH Kidney Care. Each day, our care coordinators worked hard to stay true to our mission: to improve the health of all people with kidney disease every day.

Below are the milestones our team accomplished in 2016. As we continue to grow, we pledge to always keep our patients our priority.



REACH Kidney Care served more than **4,500 patients** with chronic kidney disease in 2016.



REACH MTM provided 2,659 medication regimen reviews for more than 1,000 patients and **addressed 4,620 medication-related issues** in 2016.



REACH Kidney Care continues to be **DCI's fastest growing division** and in 2016, expanded to a total of 30 active programs around the U.S.



In 2016, REACH Kidney Care committed to helping quadruple the pre-emptive kidney transplant rate.

Reach Kidney CareSM
Real Engagement Achieving Complete Health

BRIGHTEN SOMEONE'S DAY WITH THESE PRINTABLE VALENTINES!

Happy Valentine's Day from



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