
Social media appeals and healthcare professionals

There is an increasing use of social media by potential recipients and their families to highlight the need for a living donor. For some, this can be an effective means of communication with positive results. However, often the high level of enquiries does not translate into actual donation and the expectations of donors and recipients through this process need to be carefully managed. Taking early measures and having a clear local policy prepares everyone involved and should help manage the unplanned workload for transplant teams.

Key points for healthcare professionals

- If you are aware that a recipient or their family is planning a social media appeal, they must be advised to speak to the living donor team prior to the appeal. Direct recipients and donors to the information available here www.livingdonation.scot.
- Make it clear to potential recipients and families that all donors responding to appeals must approach the transplant teams via the usual channels. Recipients and families should not be involved in the selection process.
- Individual healthcare professionals must never be named on social media platforms. Generic contact details only to be provided.
- It is sometimes helpful to set a time limit to manage the process. For example, asking any potential donors to contact the team within a three-week period from the appeal. Agree a local strategy on reviewing potential donors e.g. group meetings, individual appointments, number and type of investigations for multiple donors.
- Agreement should be made with the transplant team on a communication strategy with recipients and their families. A clear understanding of the process of how potential donors are assessed in response to appeals will manage expectations.
- In all cases, use the opportunity to highlight non-directed altruistic donation and the benefits of living donation for those waiting for a kidney transplant.

For further information on living kidney donation visit
www.livingdonation.scot

Call: Edinburgh 0131 242 1703 Glasgow 0141 451 6200