

## **Irish Kidney Association marks World Kidney Day with Kidney Health Campaign (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/114344>)**

### **IKA RAISING AWARENESS FOR WORLD KIDNEY DAY - ARE YOUR KIDNEYS OK?**

**Did you know that 1 in 10 people in Ireland and 1 in 7 over the age of 50 are living with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) – and 98% of them have no idea?**

**CKD is now on course to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2040 [\[1\]\(#\\_ftn1\)](#).**

As part of World Kidney Day 2025 which is celebrated on Thursday 13th March this year, the Irish Kidney Association (IKA) is launching its national campaign '*1 in 10 People*' to highlight the often-silent threat of kidney disease and the need to take action now to reduce the risk of kidney failure and its serious consequences. Our campaign also draws attention to the fact that high-risk groups can now be easily identified in primary care and **a simple blood and urine test can reveal the presence of CKD. This offers a real opportunity for early treatment which can slow down the disease or prevent its progression.**

The HSE National Renal Office supports the IKA's campaign which will shine a light on the importance of early detection and management of Chronic Kidney Disease from a quality-of-life perspective as well as reducing the treatment cost of kidney failure.

In new research published this week at the University of Limerick School of Medicine, 'Prevalence and Determinants of Chronic Kidney Disease among Community-dwelling Adults, 50 Years and Older in Ireland' [\[2\]](#) Professor Austin Stack, lead author and Consultant Nephrologist at University Hospital Limerick concluded that "*Compared to the national average, the burden of CKD is far greater in older individuals with major chronic conditions and socioeconomic deprivation. The identification and targeting of these groups through national surveillance programmes is likely to yield substantial benefits from more effective disease management and proactive population health planning.*"

The Irish Kidney Association's campaign aligns with the World Kidney Day theme, '[Are Your Kidneys OK? Detect early, protect kidney health](https://www.worldkidneyday.org/) (<https://www.worldkidneyday.org/>)', which calls for urgent action and attention to kidney health, especially as the disease affects an estimated 850 million people worldwide.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) affects 1 in 10 people in Ireland, with research from the *TILDA Irish Longitudinal Study* revealing that 98% of those affected are unaware they have the condition. In the over fifties, 1 in 7 individuals are also at risk. While common risk factors such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, family history of CKD, and obesity remain key contributors to CKD, other factors like ageing, autoimmune diseases, and the long-term use of certain medications (NSAIDs), can contribute to the disease.

Unfortunately, CKD, often referred to as 'the silent illness', can go undetected until it reaches advanced stages, when treatment options become more limited and costly. There are five stages of kidney disease – Stages 1 to 5. Once patients reach Stage 5, also known as End Stage Kidney Disease, their only treatment options to stay alive are dialysis treatment or kidney transplantation.

The financial burden of kidney disease in Ireland is substantial, with the cost of in-centre dialysis (hospital based and HSE contracted satellite dialysis units) alone reaching €228 million annually. Early detection and intervention, however, can help reduce these costs and prevent the need for life-altering treatments like dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Professor Donal Reddan, Consultant Nephrologist at Galway University Hospital who is President of the Irish Nephrology Society said, "*The Irish Nephrology Society strongly endorses the Irish Kidney Association's efforts to raise awareness of this important condition and looks forward to ongoing collaboration with patients and other healthcare professionals in developing a coordinated effort in this regard.*"

The HSE National Renal Office's reports that on 31st December 2024 there were 2,823 patients with a functioning kidney transplant. An additional 2,581 people are receiving dialysis treatment. Just one fifth of all dialysis patients are on the kidney transplant waiting list.

Carol Moore, Chief Executive of the Irish Kidney Association said, "*The Irish Kidney Association is marking World Kidney*

Day as part of its commitment to raising awareness of kidney disease, its prevention and management, particularly through early detection, especially amongst those identified as being in the 'at risk' groups. Research has shown that with regular screenings and early diagnosis, CKD can be managed effectively. The Irish Kidney Association is calling upon the government to endorse the World Health Organisation resolution, 'Reducing the burden of noncommunicable diseases through promotion of kidney health and strengthening prevention and control of kidney disease ([https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB156/B156\\_CONF6-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB156/B156_CONF6-en.pdf))' which is being brought to the World Health Assembly (19th-27th May in Geneva).

Ms. Moore explained, "Each year, the equivalent of two new dialysis facilities are needed in Ireland to keep up with demand, with the end stage kidney care system now overstretched, despite recent welcome investment [3]. We are aware of examples of away-from-base treatment centres for dialysis patients being unavailable so people cannot travel to see their loved ones and dialysis patients from abroad cannot travel to Ireland."

Ms. Moore concluded, We look forward to the addition of Chronic Kidney Disease into the Chronic Disease Management programme expected to begin in July 2025, a significant step forward in addressing CKD at the primary care level. It is essential that General Practitioners, who play a crucial role in early detection, have the necessary resources to diagnose and manage CKD effectively."

The Irish Kidney Association's *1 in 10 People* campaign has the endorsement of the National Renal Office and also the Irish Nephrology Society, along with the support of the Irish Pharmacy Union and various pharmacy chains at the heart of communities across Ireland.

To mark World Kidney Day the Irish Kidney Association will host a webinar on Thursday, 13th March at 7pm entitled 'My Kidney Health, What Can I Do' aimed at empowering End Stage Kidney Disease (ESKD) patients, with presentations by a renal dietitian from the INDI Renal Interest Group, renal physiotherapists from University Hospital Tallaght, and a former diabetic and dialysis female patient who recently received a kidney and pancreas transplant. To register visit <https://ika.ie/worldkidneyday/#webinar> (<https://ika.ie/worldkidneyday/#webinar>)

More information on the campaign, kidney health, and organ donation, the Irish Kidney Association's services and ways to support the charity, can be found on the Irish Kidney Association's website [www.ika.ie/worldkidneyday](http://www.ika.ie/worldkidneyday) (<http://www.ika.ie/worldkidneyday>)

## **About the Irish Kidney Association**

The Irish Kidney Association, founded in 1978, is dedicated to supporting people affected by kidney disease, raising awareness about the importance of kidney health, and promoting organ donation as the organisation that promotes and distributes the organ donor card in Ireland.

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[1] Wcn24-1204 Multidimensional Burden Of Chronic Kidney Disease In Eight Countries: Insights From The Impact CKD Study - Kidney International Reports ([https://www.kireports.org/article/S2468-0249\(24\)00629-6/fulltext](https://www.kireports.org/article/S2468-0249(24)00629-6/fulltext))

[2] Prevalence and Determinants of Chronic Kidney Disease among Community-dwelling Adults, 50 Years and Older in Ireland, at the University of Limerick School of Medicine

[3] Twenty-Five million euro was allocated in the HSE service plan in 2022

### **Region**

Nationwide

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