



Meet the hospital renal team

The hospital renal (kidney) team are health professionals who provide care for a person, once they have been referred to hospital renal services.

The team may include **some or all** of the following roles:

Nephrologist (kidney specialist) – A doctor who specialises in kidney disease and treatment and, together with you, your whānau (should you wish this) and the other team members, plan the best treatment for you.

Nephrology registrar – A senior trainee kidney doctor, heading towards becoming a nephrologist. Often works alongside the nephrologist.

Nurse practitioner – A senior nurse who has advanced clinical training to manage patient care and has the legal authority to prescribe medications.

CKD nurse educator / pre-dialysis nurse educator – Each renal unit has nurses who work alongside you and the medical team to plan the best management of your kidney disease. Their role is to support you to stay as well as you can for as long as possible *before* needing renal replacement therapy, whether it be dialysis, transplant or conservative care. They provide you and your whānau with the information and resources you need to make informed choices about your treatment options.

Home therapies nurses – Provide education, training and ongoing support for those patients who are suitable for independent home-based or community dialysis, whether it be peritoneal dialysis or home haemodialysis.

Vascular Access Nurse or Physiologist – Support planning for haemodialysis fistula creation, and provide ongoing review of vascular access where appropriate.

Dialysis nurses / Renal Physiologists – Provide support and care for patients on haemodialysis in an in-centre or satellite unit setting.

Transplant coordinator – Provide education about kidney transplant to those patients and their whānau who are suitable for transplantation. They coordinate testing and evaluation of renal patients, as well as potential living kidney donors.

Renal social worker – Provide support with referrals and applications to community, government and support agencies, applying for financial assistance, housing matters and travel. They provide support to patients and their whānau around social/whānau matters and liaise with the wider renal team where a social issue may be impacting on a person's ability to access treatment.

Renal dietician – Helps patients to improve their nutrition, considering their body size, dietary needs, and blood test results. They provide dietary advice and create food plans alongside patients with end stage renal disease, and also for those who share the role of household meal preparation.

Renal pharmacist – Works with the medical team to adjust medications based on kidney function, ensuring safety and effectiveness. They provide advice about medication side effects and interactions, particularly for patients on dialysis or transplant recipients.

Renal psychologist – Some renal units employ a psychologist who can offer specialised support for those who are struggling to adjust to life with CKD.

Kaitakawaenga/Kaiāwhina – Provide cultural, emotional and spiritual support for inpatients as well as dialysis outpatients and their whānau. They also provide support for meetings between health professionals, patients and whānau.

Hospital chaplain – Provide support to people of all faith groups or of no faith. They can spend time with you, listen to your concerns, and support you pastorally and spiritually.
