



# Irish Kidney Association



## CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

**Patient Support Assistant-  
part time**

## About the Irish Kidney Association

The Irish Kidney Association (IKA) is a charitable voluntary organisation founded in 1978. We are dedicated to meeting the needs of renal patients and their families and carers, living with, and affected by end stage renal disease. These needs are spread across all aspects of life – medical, social, and psychological.

Our primary role at the Irish Kidney Association is to support patients and their families affected by end stage kidney disease who are either being treated by dialysis or are a kidney transplant recipient.

***“Our vision is to bring about the best quality of life for those affected by end-stage kidney disease, with quality and equality in their care and treatment.”***



## Our Mission

To be the national patient-led organisation which supports, educates, and advocates for people living with, or likely to be affected by end-stage kidney disease.

## Membership

Members join the Irish Kidney Association by subscribing to the Constitution. The voluntary Board of Directors is elected from each of the 25 branches of the Association. At the year-end 2020 we had 3,701 members, of which 2,219 were patients and 1,482 were friends/family/carers, etc.

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## Our Priority

The prescribed course of each person's treatment can affect their working life, their home and family life and can often result in unemployment and loss of their meaningful identity.

A simple process such as booking a holiday with family and friends can often be restricted by the limited availability of holiday centres with dialysis facilities.

While the patient is regularly away from home receiving medical treatment for extended periods of time, the burden of the function of the sole carer and provider of a most stressed family unit, often falls on the spouse and carers.

The priority of the Association is to ensure that the unmet needs of the renal patient and family are addressed by the statutory health and education system either directly from the mainstream or via an association like ourselves. Within our resources, derived from voluntary donations and fundraising, we attempt to contribute to fulfilling these needs directly to the patient and family.

## What we do

As the only organisation representing the views of Irish kidney patients, the IKA continually lobbies on their behalf. This ongoing activity covers a wide variety of areas, including government departments, the HSE, hospitals, renal units and many other agencies. By joining with other organisations, the IKA helps in furthering the aims of all patients with chronic illness and improving their quality of life.

The patient remains at the centre of the IKA — the patient's needs are paramount.



**Organ Donor Card:** The Irish Kidney Association's main awareness event is the annual Organ Donor Card campaign. Apply online to receive a card by post or use the Digital Organ Donor Card App. Users can use the app to start the 'Organ Donation Conversation' with their family, and make sure their wishes are known.

**Support Centre:** The Irish Kidney Association Renal Support Centre has been in operation since 2000. Located in the grounds of Beaumont Hospital, the Centre is open all year round and provides free accommodation for all its residents. Rooms are available for families of kidney patients from outside Dublin, no matter what Dublin hospital their family member is attending and kidney patients who must travel long distances to see their consultant as an outpatient may stay overnight. It is planned to open a Cork support centre in 2023.

**Patient Holidays:** The Irish Kidney Association has three Holiday locations in Tramore, Tralee and Killarney which are available, free of charge, for transplant and dialysis patients to use.

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**Counselling:** The IKA provides a free, comprehensive and confidential counselling service for those diagnosed with kidney disease, their family members and carers. All counsellors are accredited with their professional body and registered with the IKA to provide this service.

**Sports Programme:** Physical health is a big part of keeping well whilst living with kidney disease, and after transplantation. IKA's Sports Programme began as a way to encourage kidney patients to be more active and as a way for people to meet others in similar situations.

Transplant & Dialysis Sport brings together the gift of life offered so generously by the donors, and their families, and the strength of the human spirit as shown by the athletes. Now a team of over 80 members, Transplant Team Ireland has competed all over the world and is internationally recognised as one of the most successful and enjoyable teams to be a part of.

**Peer Support:** The Irish Kidney Association is currently planning a phone/online formal pilot peer support service. Once evaluated, it will be expanded to reach more of our community.

## The Role

The Irish Kidney Association is now seeking to recruit a part time patient support assistant

This is one of two brand new roles arising out of increasing demand for our services.

### **Patient support assistant.**

The purpose of this role is to maintain our kind and compassionate approach while also leading the drive to enable our patient support services achieve the next stage of their development. This role focuses on supporting the Patient support manager to deliver financial aid and signpost to other support services. A background/experience in social care is essential as the assistant will communicate with patients and their families assessing their needs and organising financial aid payments. This role might suit a social care professional who wishes to work part time with regular day time working hours.

### **Our kind of person**

The people who work for the Irish Kidney Association are genuinely supportive of one another, so everyone is expected to be a team player. Given that it is an organisation that supports people who are often unwell, every member of the organisation must have a strong capacity for empathy.

### **A Typical Day**

A typical day could involve liaising with a patient, contacting a branch volunteer about a patient referral or discussing patient needs with a health care professional. Issuing referral documentation or a letter of support to access support services in the community and logging interactions and updates in patients files on our database salesforce and running reports as required for impact measurement.

Despite its small size, the Irish Kidney Association has a high public profile. It has a small, friendly team with fantastic teamwork among the staff with the branches providing a local network of contacts. Branch volunteers are dedicated to the cause - many have lived experience as either patients or family members of patients. The working environment is informal however the capacity to create positive impact cannot be underestimated. Everyone is passionate about the work they do.

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## Key information about this role

- Part-time, 2.5 days a week, 3-year contract with a view to permanency
- Days are flexible subject to attendance on Wednesdays when all team members are present in Donor house, Parkwest
- This role will be based at Donor House, Block 43A, Park West, Dublin, D12 P5V6
- This opportunity is open to people with no prior experience in the charity sector and have transferable skills. e.g., hospital or GP practice
- The salary for this role is €37,400 pro rata
- The annual leave entitlement is 20 days pro rata
- 5% employer contribution to your pension once probation is completed.
- Paid sick leave policy

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## How to Apply

The recruitment campaign for this role is being managed by Ashling Hand.

To apply for this role, please email your CV and a cover letter outlining your suitability for the role to [recruitment@ika.ie](mailto:recruitment@ika.ie) by **6pm Sunday, the 28th of August 2022**. Cover letters should be addressed to Fiona Aherne. You can apply for one or both positions, specifying clearly "counselling" and/or "patient support" as relevant.

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**Please note:**

- Shortlisting will apply
- Deadline date for applications is 6pm Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August.
- First round interviews are scheduled to take place the week starting the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2022.
- Second round candidates will be expected to complete a short online psychometric profiling and complete two tasks at interview.
- Second round interviews will likely take place the following week.
- The successful candidate will ideally be in place by late October 2022.

**More information on the Irish Kidney Association can be found on  
our website [www.ika.ie](http://www.ika.ie)**

## **Job Description Patient Support Assistant**

### **Job Purpose**

The IKA provides warm, compassionate, and empathetic patient services. The purpose of this role is to maintain this approach while also leading the drive to enable our patient services achieve the next stage of their development. This role focuses on supporting the Patient Support Manager to deliver the Patient support service.

### **Responsibilities:**

Working closely with the Patient Support Manager

- Intake referrals on the IKA's standardised grant application system for patient aid and referrals for support needs.
- Assess people's financial needs due to their kidney disease. Following assessment and where deemed necessary provide confidential financial aid under the Association's guidelines. Plan, coordinate, manage and implement support packages as identified in the referral process to assist patients, and their families, deal with difficulties and overcome dependencies.
- Build relationships with patients and their families
- Liaise with nationwide hospital social workers, branches, and nursing personnel to identify individuals in need of our support, throughout the year and during the Christmas season.
- Offer patients information and a signposting service to the most appropriate additional community and charitable supports for them.
- Maintain up to date, accurate records, and reports on patients' status.
- Refer patients to community services to aid them in recovery and liaise with professionals in local health care settings to assist the transition.
- Run reports as required.
- Any other duties that may be assigned by manager

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## Introduction

The Association is seeking an emotionally intelligent social or health care professional who

- Has the ability to listen to patients' concerns and experiences
- Exercise judgement, assign priorities, meet deadlines, and maintain strict confidentiality
- Identify of opportunities for synergy and integration
- Has the passion to deliver services in what can often be a very challenging environment
- Can adhere firmly to the Association's core values and beliefs and act in line with those values

## Essential Requirements

- Qualification in relevant discipline e.g., Social Care, Counselling, Nursing, Social work, Psychology
- At least 4 years work experience in a relevant discipline including developing and delivering support services for people living with long-term conditions
- Working knowledge of social justice theories, ethics, and practices
- Excellent communication – both written and verbal
- Excellent computer skills
- Emotionally self-aware, with social perceptiveness, empathy, and ability to self-reflect
- Listening, observational skills, an approachable personality and positive outlook
- Empathise with individuals' personal situation and convey compassion
- Demonstrate resilience, along with ability to assess complex situations
- Strong organisational skills
- Strong work ethic, with ability to be proactive and flexible
- Build and maintain professional relationships
- Willingness to submit to background checks
- Can maintain confidentiality

## Desirable

- Experience in renal healthcare
- Familiarity with the use of data bases, in particular Salesforce
- Experience of peer support structures
- Experience of working with volunteers