

OUR HISTORY

HISTORY OF NKF MALAYSIA 1970-2009

In December 1966, the fate of school teacher Harry Kydd, age 25, suffering from end stage kidney renal failure was highlighted in the press. A teacher of the Methodist Boys Primary School in Jalan Davidson, married and with two children, Harry would die if no kidney machine were available for his treatment. Dr. S.S. Gill, Consultant Nephrologist at Assunta Hospital, highlighted Harry's case in the press and funds became to pour in.

It caught the imagination of the public and when donations reached RM30,000, an artificial kidney machine was purchased. With the machine, Dr. S.S. Gill BECAME THE FIRST DOCTOR IN MALAYSIA TO PROVIDE DIALYSIS TREATMENT and when Harry died later of a stroke after his first dialysis, the machine was used to dialyse other patients suffering from end stage kidney disease at the hospital.

This incident combined with Dr. Gill's skills persuaded the Rotary Club of Petaling Jaya to take an interest in the management of patients with end stage kidney disease. This event had a significant effect on the fate of many that suffered from end stage kidney disease in the country.

In 1968, Dr. Gill appealed to the Health Ministry to extend facilities for the treatment of kidney diseases to all major hospitals in the country.

Dr. Gill was invited to speak at the Rotary Club of Petaling Jaya, the Rotary Club then undertook, as one of its projects, the provision of financial assistance to those with end stage kidney failure, thus paving the way for a national kidney foundation to be set up.

In 1969, the Government was committed to start a dialysis programme for end stage kidney disease at the General Hospital, Kuala Lumpur. To achieve this, two technicians had been sent for training to the United States namely Mohd. Hanip bin Che Man and Tan Teck Khiam. On their return, the Ministry of Health initiated the chronic dialysis program using a two tanks system.

When the new building for haemodialysis at the General Hospital, Kuala Lumpur was ready, the Multiple Biosystems Dialysis machines were set up to replace the outdated two tanks system.

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THE EARLY YEARS

The plight of Harry Kidd, a 25 year old school teacher suffering from end stage kidney failure troubled Consultant Nephrologist, Dr SS Gill, who felt something more needed to be done as death would be inevitable. With publicity, funds were raised to purchase an artificial kidney machine from the US and Kidd became the first person to undergo haemodialysis in Malaysia. The machine was used to help other patients, when later Kidd died of other complications.

The success of Dr Gill caught the attention of the Rotary Club of Petaling Jaya, who joined forces on the subject of a national kidney foundation and this paved the way for the eventual setting up of the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia.

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The Launch

The National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF), launched under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Petaling Jaya on 16th January 1970 under the chairmanship of J.W Henderson, where the then Minister of Health, the late Tan Sri Haji Sardon bin Haji Jubir became its first President. In the early years, the founder members Dato' Dr Sreenevasan and Dr SS Gill were involved in the training of personnel such as nurses, renal technicians and the conducting of seminars on kidney disease and transplantation.

The National Kidney Foundation's work with the government to establish the Institute of Urology and Nephrology at General Hospital, Kuala Lumpur in 1970. laid the foundation for the future, the setting up of a model dialysis unit by the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia for the benefit of poor and needy patients in Jalan Hang Lekiu, Kuala Lumpur.

In 1991, a Telethon fundraising Project and a donation from the Ministry of Welfare resulted in the realization of dream by NKF.

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The first model dialysis centre, Hang Lekiu

The National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia became the first NGO to set up and run a dialysis centre for the benefit of poor and needy patients and this was achieved in 1993 with the help of Dr SS Gill, Dato Dr Sreenevasan and Dato Dr Zaki Morad Bin Mohd Zaher, Consultant Nephrologist, who contributed their significant resources for this project.

For the first time, quality dialysis care was made available to lower income groups at a subsidized rate of RM60.

In the first seven years, seven dialysis centres were set up, together with Hang Lekiu and to-date the number stands at 25 dialysis centres nationwide, tribute to the foresight, prudence and hard work of the founder members.

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NKF today

From 1970, with the numbers of dialysis patients expanding, the need to put in place a sound administrative system, resulted in the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer in 1997 to oversee the operations in NKF.

The continuous good governance experienced by NKF where the founder fathers of the National Kidney Foundation, Dato' Dr Sreenevasan, served for more than 28 years as President, the current President, Board of Governors, NKF, Tan Sri Dato' Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman, serving since 2001, Dato Dr. Zaki Morad Mohd Zaher serve as the current Chairman, Board of Managers and provides valuable input to the overall administration of NKF.

All this further enhances the work and reputation of the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia as a premier centre, providing quality dialysis care to more than 1400 patients with early detection and prevention of kidney disease playing a key role for a more holistic approach to kidney care and not just dialysis alone.

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Establishment of the first Board of Governors

With rapid expansion of NKF, it became necessary to establish a Board of Governors and the first Board was made up of seven distinguished members, Dato' K. Pathmanaban as President, Dato' Syed Idid, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, Dato' Lam Peng Chong, Dato' Lee Lam Thye, Datuk Haji Ibrahim bin Abdul Rahman and Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, appointed as an alternative to Tan Sri Dato' Dr Jeffrey Cheah. Tan Sri Datuk Clifford F. Herbert joined the Board of Governors when Dato' Lee Lam Thye resigned in 1997. Lynn Kulasingam, formerly of the Auditors General's Office was invited to be a member of the Board of Governors at its first meeting on 17th August 1994.

The late Dato' Pathmanaban, then the Deputy Minister of Health proved to be an invaluable asset and headed a Committee which prepared the 'Memorandum on a proposal to establish a nationwide kidney dialysis programme'. The other members in the Committee were Prof. Datin Dr. Norella Kong, Dr. S.S. Gill, Mr. Ho Soon Choy, Ms. Lynette Lim and Dato' Dr. G.A. Sreenevasan.

With all the professional help given by the Board of Managers, NKF was able to evolve a fairly full proof procedure to monitor the granting of tenders and the control of major expenses in our expansion programmes.

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Government pledged RM25 million to NKF

NKF's efforts towards end stage kidney disease was officially acknowledged when the Government through the Ministry of Finance pledged RM25 million as a grant to NKF in 1996.

NKF received RM15 million and upon receipt of the grant, NKF invited government representatives to sit on its Board of Governors. The Ministry of Health then appointed Dato' Dr. Haji Megat Burhanuddin as their representative and the Ministry of Finance Tuan Syed Abdul Rahman bin Syed Adnan.



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NKF published first NKF Newsletter SHARE

The first issue of SHARE, NKF Malaysia's very own newsletter, published three times a year currently, was launched in January 1996. The newsletter provided a channel of direct communication with our peers, patients, donors and contributors.

The aim is to keep our peers, patients, donors and contributors informed of all aspects of kidney diseases and to increase public awareness and understanding on various kidney-related issues and what NKF is doing to make a difference.

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NKF appointed first Chief Executive Officer

As NKF grew with the establishment of new dialysis centres, it became necessary to appoint a Chief Executive Officer to oversee the overall administration and running of the various centres. This was especially important as budgets for the various centres had to be monitored to ensure that the requirements of the internal and external auditors were met.

Lee Siew Kuan was appointed as the first CEO of NKF on 15th October 1997. As CEO, he set a clear course for NKF to achieve its goals and when Goh Seng Chuan took over in 2002, NKF had clearly established guidelines for the efficient running of the various centres within established budgets.



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Setting up of Welfare Unit

The welfare unit was established in 1997 under Mary Chuah, a social worker, as the number of dialysis patients had grown and there was a need to cater to their individual needs.

Many other aspects of patient welfare were implemented such as the Patient Incentive Fund. Under this fund, small loans are given out to patients to enable them to start small businesses or scholarships/study loans for them or their children to secure gainful employment. Today, with **1430** patients, there is a full-time Welfare Manager, Ms Mah Ah Noye.

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Public Education Department

The Public Education Unit, established in January 2001 with the purpose of providing members of the public with information on early detection and prevention of kidney and kidney associated diseases, was expanded with the employment of a full time Manager in January 2007 to oversee the Department and the building of a NKF LifeCheck Mobile Health Screening Unit, a 40-seater bus with 7 workstations, for screening on urine, blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, body mass index, waist circumference as well as counseling.

The NKF LifeCheck Mobile Health Screening Unit, launched in January 2008 was sponsored by the Sunway Group. NKF LifeCheck received a boost with the support of CIMB Foundation under its Community Link Program, where a Toyota van was contributed for the project, to enable a second team to carry out health screening due to demand over the weekends and to provide health screening in areas inaccessible to the bus. Besides, health talks, exhibitions and NKF Dialysis Centre Open Houses were conducted in various locations to educate members of the

public on kidney and kidney associated diseases.

The NKF Kidney Care Program, an integrated annual educational program targeted at children and members of the public was launched on 16th March 2008 during the celebrations of WKD 2008. Of which, a NKF Kidney Care logo was launched, a series of 7 educational articles were published in the print media. There has also been collaboration with the Persatuan Tadika Malaysia (PTM) to produce children activity sheets with kidney information for the benefit of kindergarten students.

The NKF LifeCheck Mobile Health Screening Services was first available in the Klang Valley and the surrounding areas but in April 2008, the team ventured out of the Klang Valley and has covered Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu as at May 2009 mainly attributed to the partnership with CIMB Foundation. To date the NKF LifeCheck teams have successfully screened more than 80,000 as at July 2010.

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Opening of NKF's New Secretariat Office

The NKF celebrated the opening of the new secretariat office in Section 14, Petaling on 30th May 2003. The new office was declared opened by Tan Sri Dato' Abu Bakar bin Suleiman, President of the Board of Governors.

Before this, NKF has been dependent on rented premises since the establishment of its first dialysis centre in 1993. The rented space ran out very quickly as NKF grew from 5 centres in 1996 to 25 centres in July 2010. The Board of Managers decided to acquire the adjacent property in January 2003 and Secretariat office was relocated to the new building in April 2003.

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Training Unit for Dialysis Assistant and Post Basic Haemodialysis Courses

As NKF felt it was important to standardise the quality of dialysis care, a Training Unit was set up in August 2003

Thus, together with Chong Kwai Fong, Tutor for kidney nursing and Tuan Haji Ngatiman, Head Tutor, NKF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health embarked in training Dialysis Assistants.

The aim is to train Dialysis Assistants so they could provide quality dialysis care to patients on haemodialysis treatment.

To boost the Training Unit, Sister Cecilia Lee joined NKF as the Clinical Tutor in 2004 and assisted Tuan Haji Ngatiman until his resignation in December 2005. As the course has grown in popularity, Choo Soke Har joined as Tutor in 2006.

Since the resignation of Tuan Haji Ngatiman in December 2006, Sister Cecilia Lee has taken over as Acting Head Tutor. In September 2009, a Manager has been appointed to head the Training Division, Ms Rashidah Robani
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The growth of NKF Dialysis Centres

As the leading provider of dialysis in Malaysia, NKF has been enjoying significant growth in the number of dialysis centres being set up annually. To-date there are 25 dialysis centres nationwide with 10 in the Klang Valley and the rest in various states throughout the country. There are plans to set up dialysis centres in Kota Kinabalu and Kuching.

Since the setting up of the first NKF Dialysis Centre in 1993 at Jalan Hang Lekiu, the number of NKF dialysis centres has since expanded to 25 and the demand is growing as the number of dialysis patients increases annually.

From 2000 onwards, many organizations joined NKF as partners in the setting up of dialysis centres and this resulted in the growth of NKF dialysis centres throughout Malaysia. The National Kidney Foundation welcomes organizations to join NKF in setting up dialysis centres to make dialysis treatment more accessible to the poor and needy patients who are in need of dialysis treatment.

List of 25 NKF Dialysis Centres and the date of setting up [\(table\)](#)