



Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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www.lifeoptions.org

Q: What does the social worker do for me?

A: By law, all dialysis clinics must have a social worker with a master's degree and training to counsel patients and their families. Some things your social worker can help with include:

- Coping with kidney disease
- Finding a list of centers for you to call when you want to travel
- Working out conflicts with family, staff, or others
- Setting goals in any area of your life
- Finding new activities or returning to activities you enjoy
- Making referrals to vocational rehabilitation if you need training or help finding a new job
- Getting the help you need from other agencies and organizations

In some centers, social workers also help patients find drug discount programs, work out transportation, and deal with insurance problems—or a social work assistant or office manager may take on these tasks.

What *I* can do to work best with my social worker:

- Talk to my social worker honestly about my feelings and the kind of help I need to have a full life on dialysis.
- Ask my social worker to step in if I'm having a problem with my family, friends, or other staff at my center.
- Ask my social worker to tell me about other treatment options, like home dialysis or transplant.
- Visit module 3 of Kidney School™: *Working with Your Healthcare Team* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.