



EKHA Calls on EU Policy Makers to step up to the challenge of improving access to kidney care in Europe

13 March 2014: **Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)** is increasing at alarming rates – nearly 1 in 10 Europeans are affected with some degree of kidney damage. In many cases CKD will lead to end-stage kidney failure. According to the **European Kidney Health Alliance**, more than 250,000 patients in Europe are currently on dialysis or have a functioning kidney transplant, a number that has more than doubled over the past fifteen years.

If this trend continues, our national governments will have to spend more than 5 per cent of their annual healthcare budgets on renal replacement therapies without taking into account its wider costs in terms of additional medical expenses, reduced capacity to work, decreased quality of life and expectancy, increased morbidity... as we know all too well, this list goes on.

Despite our efforts, our patients on dialysis currently face enormous challenges. Access to high quality renal replacement therapies varies greatly throughout the EU and most importantly, opportunities for the best and most cost-effective treatment - kidney transplantation - are severely restricted due to significant shortage of donor kidneys.

EKHA draws your attention to these challenges, on **13th March, World Kidney Day 2014** to form a united front to tackle this problem.

This year the European Kidney Health Alliance is shining the spotlight on the health inequalities in Europe and varying access to renal replacement therapies. We are calling upon our national health systems and our EU legislators to join us in recognising the need for improved access. EKHA will hold a Forum in the European Parliament on April 2nd, hosted by our MEP Group for Kidney Health, to examine this issue and start working on solutions. (see <http://ekha.eu/htmldocs/ekha/7-23/events/ekha.html>)

Now, EKHA invites you, on the occasion of **World Kidney Day** join our call policy initiatives at the European level that will reduce the burden of kidney disease in Europe. Such actions may include among others:

- Better education on the prevention of kidney disease and chronic disease in general
- Improvement or promotion of organ donor schemes
- Introduction of national registries on kidney disease
- Allocation of funds for training programs dedicated to kidney care health professionals

European Kidney Health Alliance

Rue du Luxembourg 22-24 | 1000 Brussels | Belgium

tel: +32 2 213 13 98 | email: info@ekha.eu