

Am I ready to go to work?

Your health should always be your top priority. Before considering returning to work or finding employment, you need to assess whether you are physically and mentally ready to work. Making smooth transition for successful results requires the involvement of the medical team. Talk to your nephrologist, dietician, nurse, social worker, dialysis technician, and vocational rehabilitation counselor.

The purpose of dialysis is not just to keep you alive. Dialysis is also meant to help you stay active and keep doing the things you love. Rehabilitation for people on dialysis means being able to do things you need and want to do.

The state vocational rehabilitation (VR) office is the designated service provider for the renal patient. State and federal funding provide a public service to develop, improve or reinstate the ability of End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) patients to become employed, or as self sufficient as possible.

Additional Resources

- Social Security Administration's web site, log on to www.ssa.gov
- LifeOptionsRehabilitation Program is specifically targeted for ESRD patients. To find out more call 1-800-468-7777, or Log on to www.lifeoptions.org
- The Ticket to Work Program allows disabled persons to obtain services from approved providers or "employment networks". Visit the website at www.yourtickettowork.com

Other Vocational Rehab Resources

http://www.vba.gov/bln/vre/emp_resources.htm

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work>

<http://www.kidney.org/>



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VOCATIONAL REHAB RESOURCES



Promoting and facilitating high quality care standards for dialysis and kidney transplant patients in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) can be defined as the process of facilitating an individual in the choice of, or return to, a suitable vocation. When necessary, assisting the patient to obtain training for such a vocation. Vocational rehabilitation can also mean preparing an individual regardless of age or physical condition to cope emotionally, psychologically, and physically with changing circumstances in life, including remaining at school, work, or a work equivalent (homemaker).

INSIDE!

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LIVING AND WORKING WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD) OR END STAGE RENAL DISEASE (ESRD)

Who is eligible for VR services?

To be eligible for assistance from VR, a person must:

- Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter into, engage in, or retain gainful employment.
- Have a physical or mental impairment that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment.

There is no age limit for eligibility except that the individual must be of employable age.

What services will VR offer to help me become employed?

VR provides a wide range of services. You and your counselor will determine which services are required to help you become employed. At all stages through your VR program, you shall be provided with vocational information that will guide to make informed choices regarding your vocational plan.

Who pays for VR services?

Some services such as assessments, guidance, counseling, and assisting in finding a job, are provided at no cost. Payment for other services is based on the individual's and /or the family's income, resources, and ability to pay costs. However, economic need will not be a factor in determining eligibility or order of selection categories.

Do government programs help people with Kidney Disease find work?

Social Security has many programs designed to help you find a job. If you receive either Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), ask your social worker for information about work incentive programs that will allow you to ease back into work. Find out about the Ticket to Work and self sufficient programs. The department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers VR services to qualified veterans.

How do I apply?

To apply for VR services, please contact the VR district office nearest to you. Contact information is provided for each state - Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

Will confidentiality be maintained when I apply for VR services?

Throughout the vocational rehabilitation process, you will be asked to provide personal information that will help your counselor to understand your specific needs and determine whether you are eligible for services. Your counselor can provide more information if you have questions about the policies on personal information and confidentiality.

www.HeartlandKidney.org

What laws protect me against job discrimination?

The Civil Rights Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disability Act all protect you from job discrimination. This would include being fired or being turned down for a job or a promotion because of an illness or condition that does not affect your ability to do your job.

Iowa:

Vocational Rehabilitation Services
1-800-532-1486 V/TDD
www.ivrs.iowa.gov

Kansas:

Rehabilitation Services (RS)
1-888-369-4777
www.srskansas.org/rehab/text/VR/htm

Missouri:

Vocational Rehabilitation
1-877-222-8963
www.vr.dese.mo.gov

Nebraska:

Vocational Rehabilitation Services
1-800-472-3382
www.vocrehab.state.ne.us