

Dear Patient,

We are changing our Chronic Disease Annual Review process. From now on this will be called a **Long Term Condition (LTC) Review**. As an organisation, we have redesigned the service we offer to include a wider range of patients and their conditions. We hope this will make the care we provide even safer, more robust and efficient.

If you have been invited to read this letter it is because we have identified you as having a diagnosis of **Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)** from your notes. This was not a condition previously included in our annual review process so please don't be alarmed if you haven't been invited in previous years. Most of you will already be aware of your diagnosis, however there may be some of you who are not.

Please find below some basic information on CKD:

### **Overview**

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a long-term condition where the kidneys don't work as well as they should.

It's a common condition often associated with getting older. It can affect anyone, but it's more common in certain ethnic groups.

CKD can get worse over time and eventually the kidneys may stop working altogether, but this is uncommon. Many people with CKD are able to live long lives with the condition.

### **Symptoms of CKD**

There are usually no symptoms of kidney disease in the early stages. It may only be diagnosed if you have a blood or urine test for another reason and the results show a possible problem with your kidneys.

### **Causes of CKD**

Chronic kidney disease is usually caused by other conditions that put a strain on the kidneys. Often it's the result of a combination of different problems.

CKD can be caused by:

- [high blood pressure](#) – over time, this can put strain on the small blood vessels in the kidneys and stop the kidneys working properly
- [diabetes](#) – too much glucose in your blood can damage the tiny filters in the kidneys
- [high cholesterol](#) – this can cause a build-up of fatty deposits in the blood vessels supplying your kidneys, which can make it harder for them to work properly
- [kidney infections](#)
- [glomerulonephritis](#) – kidney inflammation
- [polycystic kidney disease](#) – an inherited condition where growths called cysts develop in the kidneys

- blockages in the flow of urine – for example, from [kidney stones](#) that keep coming back, or an [enlarged prostate](#)
- long-term, regular use of certain medicines – such as lithium and [non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs \(NSAIDs\)](#)

You can help [prevent CKD](#) by making healthy lifestyle changes and ensuring any underlying conditions you have are well controlled.

### **Tests for CKD**

CKD can be diagnosed and monitored using blood and urine tests. These tests look for high levels of certain substances in your blood and urine that are signs your kidneys aren't working properly.

### **Treatments for CKD**

There's no cure for CKD, but treatment can help relieve the symptoms and stop it getting worse.

Your treatment will depend on how severe your condition is.

The main treatments are:

- lifestyle changes to help you remain as healthy as possible
- medicine to control associated problems such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol
- other options may be required in more severe cases

You'll also be invited to have regular check-ups to monitor your condition as part of your Long Term Condition (LTC) Review.

### **Want to know more?**

- Kidney Care UK: [chronic kidney disease](#)
- National Kidney Federation: [what is kidney disease](#)
- Kidney Research UK: [chronic kidney disease](#)

\*Above information adapted from: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/)

We hope this letter reassures you and has provided you with some basic information on CKD. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us as we will be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

Many thanks for your ongoing support,

Bideford Medical Centre