

Stationary House
Acacia Avenue
Port Talbot
SA12 7DP

To Whom it may Concern,

RE: Opening of New Dialysis Unit

My name is Joseph Townsend, I work as a dialysis Healthcare support worker (Band 3) at Morriston hospital. And am also a renal patient and have been since 2005. I am writing this letter of support to aid the quick transition of opening a new dialysis unit in Neath Port Talbot.

I've been working in West Renal Dialysis Unit as a Healthcare Support Worker since 4th July 2021. I've been wanting to do this role for a while as I wanted to help other patients who are going through the same renal experience, and show them that there is hope during their kidney journey.

Through this role, I have engaged with patient whilst putting in their needles in ready for their Haemodialysis treatment or when waiting for dialysis machines to finish rinsing and/ or cleaning before treatments. This has given me ample opportunity to discuss with patients being their thoughts and feelings.

Patients often disclose how long their day is with the traveling to and from hospital and then having treatment which can total up to eight hours each dialysis day, especially when patients do not live in the Swansea area. However, when patients were informed of the possibility of a new dialysis unit opening in Neath Port Talbot, they started to get excited. Patient stated that they would drive themselves due to the distance and will not need ambulance anymore. Some patient expressed the idea of walking into dialysis which is great for keeping fit, dialysis health and mental health.

A bit about myself:

- In 2005 I was diagnosed with IGA Neuropathy: a kidney disease that attacks the nephrons (filters) in the kidneys.
- In August of 2006 I start on Peritoneal Dialysis, which consists of four bag exchanges in the peritoneum (tissue that lines the abdominal wall of the pelvic cavity) over 24hours.
- In September of 2006 my mum kindly donated her kidney to me. Sadly, this only lasted just over 4 years and had to go back on PD dialysis, but this time it didn't work for me so ended up have a line in my chest and a fistula for start Dialysis.
- While they waited for my fistula to mature what takes about 6 weeks the had to use my line in my chest for Dialysis. So, I was coming back and forth the hospital 3 times a week.
- After about 3 months I was offered a place in self-care where you learn how to dialyse yourself at home. I was traveling back and forth from the hospital by ambulance for about a year while I had to wait for a machine so I could go home and some days I was out of the house for up to 8-10 hours a day.
- In 2015, I had the life changing phone call for a transplant.
- In July 2021, I started as a dialysis healthcare support worker and really enjoy my job.

I feel this new unit will bring a lot of hope to patients within the local area, as well as creating new jobs. It will also benefit patients' mobility, health and fitness, and mental health if they are able to exercise by walking into dialysis treatment.

Yours Sincerely,

Joseph Townsend

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joseph Townsend', written over a horizontal line.

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