When the going gets tough... Story on page 2

- NKF Carnival - Lighting Up Lives 4
- Extending Support to Peritoneal Patients 6
- Northern Trust Gift to NKF 8
... the tough get going

Unassuming, warm and gracious.
That was our first impression of 80-year-old Mr Vaithilinga Pandithar Dakshina Moorthi when we met up with him for a photo shoot at his hair salon in Little India.

Neatly clad in his sky blue shirt and grey pants, the small-build barber was totally at home during the photo shoot. To the casual onlooker, he looked like a healthy and able-bodied person. No one would have thought of him being a kidney patient.

Never thought this would happen to him
Coming from India in his late teens, life was tough for Mr Vaithilinga who had no skills, but he believed that things would get better. Fortunately for him, he managed to learn barbering and became a full-time barber since the 1950s.

Life seemed stable until he went for his regular medical examination to check his hypertension which he had for 8 years. It was in 2001 that he was diagnosed with kidney failure. It was a blow to him and his family as he did not show any apparent sign of the disease, prior to the diagnosis. He and his family were in utter disbelief as he had no family history of kidney failure, much less any inkling of what dialysis was all about. He felt fearful and was filled with uncertainty of what the future held for him. It was an emotionally challenging time for him and his family.

As soon as he came to terms with his condition, Mr Vaithilinga started dialysis treatment at a private dialysis centre. However, within a year, much of his savings had depleted and he could no longer afford the expensive dialysis treatment.

NKF assistance
That was when he heard of NKF and sought their assistance. Today, he is grateful to NKF for helping him undergo dialysis at highly subsidised rates where he pays only about $60 every month, easing his financial strain. In addition, he receives treatment at a dialysis centre conveniently located near his home, which helps him cut down on travel expenses.

With changing social demography and an ageing population, NKF has to increasingly deal with patients having age-related illnesses. With about half of its haemodialysis patients aged 61 and above, 5% are aged 81 and above. More specialised treatments are required to meet their needs.

Undaunted by adversity
Despite having kidney failure, Mr Vaithilinga remains optimistic and has not thought of giving up on life. “He took it in his stride and always portrayed a strong and positive image in front of us,” said his daughter, Madam Kali.

Having had dialysis at NKF for over a decade, he has gotten used to it and does not feel any major discomfort. In fact, he feels refreshed and healthy after each session, which motivates him to lead a meaningful life.

Good family support
Fortunately for Mr Vaithilinga, he has strong family support from his wife, 2 children and 2 grandchildren. Not only do they constantly encourage him, but they also often spend time with him and send him for dialysis during their free time.

Continue working despite his illness
Going to work daily may be a chore for most people, but having worked for more than 70 years and also determined to lead a normal life to earn his keep to pay for his treatment, Mr Vaithilinga would rather work at the salon than watch TV at home. He now works part-time daily, where he stands for about 6 to 9 hours, trimming haircuts with his deft skills.

Even at 80, working certainly has not taken a toll on Mr Vaithilinga as it has helped him attain a fit physique and maintain overall good health.

Mr Vaithilinga had this advice for others. “Take care of your diet and remember to exercise to keep fit. Don’t worry too much and be happy. Take each day as it comes.”
NKF Carnival - Lighting Up Lives

16 September 2012 (Sunday)
9am-9pm, Marina Barrage

Guest-of-Honour: Mr Sam Tan Chin Siong
Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
Mayor, Central Singapore District

We bring you back into the 60s and 70s where different generations of all races come together to bond, reminisce the good old days, savour classic local food and participate in games! All proceeds will go towards the purchase of artificial kidneys for NKF patients.

For more details or purchase of carnival coupons, call 6299 0200, log on to www.nkfs.org, email contact_us@nkfs.org
Extending Support to Peritoneal Dialysis Patients

For patients whose kidneys have failed, dialysis or transplantation are the ways to prolong their lives. Two forms of dialysis treatment are available, Haemodialysis (HD) and Peritoneal Dialysis (PD). While HD requires the patient to travel to a dialysis centre, be hooked up to a machine and need a nurse to carry out the procedures, PD is home-based and requires the patient or his caregiver to carry out the procedure.

PD process involves filling around 2 litres of PD fluid into the abdomen and replacing it 3 to 5 times a day via the catheter. The replacement of the fluid (known as PD exchanges) can be done with or without the help of a machine. If the patient chooses to do the exchange manually, then a daily average of 4 exchanges has to be done during the day. If the patient chooses to use the machine, then the exchange can be done over 10 hours while the patient sleeps.

Advantages of Peritoneal Dialysis:

• No need for vascular access and needling as vascular access-related complications are the most common causes of hospitalisation in haemodialysis patients.

• Better time flexibility that fits into their work schedule.

• Better quality of life as they enjoy the independence of being in-charge of their own treatment.

Patients Benefit from Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) Community Support Programme

The NKF PD home visit is conducted by a team of experienced PD nurses providing support to the PD patients in carrying out this treatment at home.

These regular visits boost the confidence of the patient in self-care and, at the same time, allow early identification of problems and provide opportunities for timely intervention. This may in turn help patients reduce hospitalisations and improve their well-being. As at 30 June 2012, there were 300 PD patients who were subsidised by NKF.
As part of its corporate social responsibility, long time supporter of NKF, Northern Trust (Singapore), donated a dialysis machine to benefit needy kidney patients. In appreciation of their support, NKF held a plate-mounting ceremony at Sakyadhita-NKF Dialysis Centre on 13 May 2012.

Dialysis machines provide a lifeline to kidney patients. Currently, NKF is serving over 2,400 patients at its 25 dialysis centres island-wide. To help these patients and the many more who will turn to us for help, we remain committed to give them life and hope by constantly expanding our dialysis services. These include providing new dialysis machines as well as replacing older ones.

The average life span of a dialysis machine is 7 to 8 years. One dialysis machine can benefit 6 patients who are on dialysis 4 to 5 hours each time, 3 times a week. This dialysis machine by Northern Trust will indeed give life to our patients and serves as a source of encouragement to them as they are reminded that there are people in the community who care about them.

Northern Trust has been helping NKF in many ways. Last year, they supported us by buying a table at our Charity Dinner, participated in our International Volunteer Day cum Patients’ Active Day by running a game stall, as well as donated furniture which we have put to good use at our various dialysis centres.

“Throughout our 123-year history, Northern Trust has aligned efforts with our guiding principles of service, expertise and integrity,” said Teresa Parker, Chief Executive Officer of Northern Trust (Asia-Pacific) with Mr Gerard Eu, Chairman, NKF at the plate-mounting ceremony.

“That’s why our Singapore office team is proud to support National Kidney Foundation by donating a kidney dialysis machine as part of our ongoing philanthropic efforts and partnership with them. We are also delighted to be organising volunteer visits and celebrating local festive holidays with patients of this Dialysis Centre.”

The work of the NKF is only possible because of caring and compassionate organisations such as Northern Trust. We deeply appreciate their steadfast support towards our cause.