

## By Correspondent James Kandoya

---

KIDNEYS dialysis is an artificial replacement for lost kidney function or renal replacement therapy.

It is normally used for patients who have become ill and have acute kidney failure, a temporary loss of kidney function or to fairly stable patients who have permanently lost kidney function.

For those who have chronic kidney's diseases, peritoneal dialysis is in most cases done, where tubes perform the function of the kidneys.

These involve removal of waste products from the blood and regulation of water fluid levels in the body in the same efficiency as could be done by kidneys.

According to Tanzania Kidney Foundation Vice chairperson, Caleb Chiwmejo the treatment has caused patients to face many challenges including the financial problem.

Chiwmejo says that the lifelong challenge is still alarming in their mind since the dialysis process is very expensive hence cause them fail to part in order to support their life.

"Being diagnosed with kidney problem, do not only brings variety of emotions, but also financial obligations one of many which are difficult for patients to meet," Chiwmejo reveals

Chiwmejo adds that the daunting financial challenges over the years have forced them to give up their jobs due to chronic illness.

He further says that to most patients bills seemed to be high from year to year as their sources of income become smaller, and many patients are overwhelmed by it.

On top of that, high out-of-pocket costs, logistical and physical demands of dialysis treatment make them difficult to work full-time.

Explaining the importance of dialysis process, the chairman reveals that treatment is very important since it performs the functions that are similar to those of kidneys.

According to him, it helps to remove toxins from the blood that is why patients with kidney failure are offered with this treatment, although it very costly.

“It is so expensive since patients have to part with almost not less than 1m/- per week in order to have the treatment,” he explains.

Citing an example, Chewmejo says one person is supposed to undergo dialysis three times a week with each 300,000/- each session meaning that every patient has to pay 900,000/- per week.

“Having a kidney transplant as soon as possible is the only way to curtail such expenses. However, most patients are not fortunate enough because of unavailability of both kidney donors and funds.” he adds.

He however points out major causes of kidney failure as diabetes and hypertension which are considered to be lifetime's diseases and once kidneys fail, there are no medicines.

In general, Chewmejo insists that awareness campaign to the public on how to protect the health of their kidneys.

It is due to the fact that we have lost most of colleagues simply because they could not afford to pay for dialysis sessions and once you miss for 10 days no way out you collapse.

Currently in the country there are few hospitals where patients can go for hemodialysis including Regency hospital, TMJ, Agha Khan, University of Dodoma and Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH).

Tanzania lists a number of challenges including few numbers of nephrologists, only 2 certified nephrologists available countrywide.

