This document will describe the purpose, procedures, benefits and risks associated with the kidney list exchange program.

Before you agree to participate in the kidney transplant list exchange program, it is important that you read and understand how this program works. If you have any questions about your decision to participate in this program, be sure they are answered before you agree to participate.

There are many treatment options available. If you do not wish to take part in this program, it will not affect the other treatment options available to you.

**What is the purpose of the KLE program?**

Receiving a kidney transplant will most likely allow you to live longer than if you remain on dialysis. The sooner you receive a kidney transplant, the better your outcome will be. The purpose of this program is to allow willing, but non-matching, donors to donate a kidney in order for their intended recipient to receive a kidney sooner.

**How does the KLE program work?**

In this program, a willing donor who cannot donate to their intended recipient will donate their kidney to an unknown recipient already waiting on the deceased donor waiting list whose blood group and tissue type match. In exchange, the donor’s intended recipient will move closer to the top of the deceased donor waiting list and will receive a deceased donor kidney transplant sooner.
For example, a husband would like to donate a kidney to his wife. His wife’s blood type does not match his blood type. The husband then gives one of his kidneys to a person on the waiting list that matches his blood type. In return his wife is put at the top of her blood type waiting list.

See below.

**Figure 1: Kidney list exchange**

![Diagram of kidney list exchange]

**Deceased Donor Waiting list**

- Living Donor
- Intended Recipient
- Unable to directly donate
- Recipient at top of the list
- Second in line
- Third in line

**What steps are involved?**

- If you agree to participate, you and your donor will be tested. If you are both suitable for the kidney transplant, the donor surgery will be booked.

- After the living donor surgery has been performed, you will be placed at the top of the deceased donor waiting list for your blood group (after the medically urgent patients).
What are the risks and benefits?

You have already talked to us about the general risks and benefits of receiving a transplant and the risks and benefits for the donor. Here are the risks and benefits of the kidney list exchange program:

For you, the original intended recipient of the living donor:
You will benefit by receiving a kidney in a shorter period of time. For a recipient who is about to be listed, their name will be placed at the top of the deceased donor list within their blood grouping. For a recipient already on the deceased donor list, it provides the opportunity to move to the top of the list within their own blood group.

For the living donor:
The living donor may benefit from knowing that they have given a kidney to someone who has waited a long time for that gift. The donor may also benefit from knowing that their donation helped you get a transplant sooner. This program does mean that their kidney will be given to someone the donor will not meet. The donor may feel uncomfortable donating a kidney to a stranger. It is important for the donor to discuss these feelings with the transplant team.

For the person who receives the living donor kidney:
This person may have waited for some time on the deceased donor list and now has the chance to receive a kidney from a living donor.

What is the difference in receiving a live donor kidney compared to a deceased donor kidney?

It is important to know that the survival of the new kidney is about 5% higher at one year and 5 to 10 percent higher at 5 years with a living donor compared to a deceased donor kidney. Even though you may get less benefit from a deceased kidney, it is important to receive a kidney as soon as possible. Waiting a long time for a kidney while on dialysis can shorten both your survival time and that of your kidney.
What complications may occur?

There is a small chance that one of the two transplants may need to be stopped during the surgery. Although rare, a problem may happen or be found during the surgery that makes it unsafe to continue. In this case, one of the following will happen:

1. If something happens and the planned recipient (not relative or friend of the living donor) is unable to continue with the transplant, the donor kidney will be offered to the next suitable recipient on the deceased donor waiting list.

2. During the surgery, if the planned donor kidney is found to be unusable, the name of the original intended (relative or friend of the living donor) recipient will still be placed at the top of the deceased donor waiting list.

3. It is possible that one of the two transplants may not be successful. Most but not all kidney transplants are successful. You must consider the small chance that a living donor may provide a kidney, which works well in the unrelated recipient, but his/her related recipient may get a kidney that does not work as well or does not work at all.

Can I withdraw from the KLE program?

Your participation is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Who should I contact for more information?

The primary contact person is the living donor transplant coordinator at St. Michael’s Hospital. 416-867-7460 ext.8219

St. Michael’s cares about your health. For reliable health information, visit our Patient and Family Learning Centre, Room 6-004, 6th floor, Cardinal Carter Wing, or find us online at www.stmichaelshospital.com/learn

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Ask your healthcare provider about this information if you have questions.