

PRESS RELEASE

The National Kidney Registry Facilitates 5,000th Kidney Transplant

(Greenwich, CT – June 17, 2021) The National Kidney Registry announced the completion of its 5,000th paired exchange transplant, which took place yesterday at UCLA Medical Center. The UCLA recipient was a standard voucher holder whose donor facilitated an earlier chain of three transplants. The kidney came from a family voucher donor at Mayo Clinic Rochester.

Dr. Jeff Veale, Professor and Director of the UCLA Kidney Paired Exchange Program, who performed the 5,000th transplant, commented, “We are very proud to have taken part in this great milestone. UCLA was the second center to join the NKR in 2008, so it is especially meaningful to see the incredible growth of the registry to over 100 centers and the completion of this 5,000th paired exchange transplant.”

Dr. Mikel Prieto, the donor surgeon who performed the 5,000th NKR-facilitated donor nephrectomy at Mayo Clinic Rochester, said, “It was a real honor to be a part of the 5,000th transplant facilitated by the NKR. The achievement of this milestone demonstrates the power of paired exchange and underscores the vast number of patients being helped by this broad collaboration between U.S. transplant centers.”

The first NKR paired exchange transplants were facilitated on Valentine’s Day in February 2008 at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Reflecting on the accomplishment of the 5,000th transplant, Dr. Sandip Kapur, Director of the Kidney Transplant Program at Cornell, commented, “If someone had told me in 2008 that we would be completing our 5000th NKR-facilitated transplant in 13 years, I don’t think I would have believed them. This is truly an outstanding accomplishment that demonstrates the power of innovation and teamwork across the transplant community.”

Garet Hil, Founder and CEO of the NKR remarked, “It took us 13 years to reach 5,000 transplants—we are now focused on achieving the 10,000th transplant within the next four years. The extraordinary cooperation between our member centers and the generosity of living donors is the primary driver for this success, and one of the key reasons that the kidney transplant community in the United States is the best in the world.”

About the National Kidney Registry

The National Kidney Registry (www.kidneyregistry.org) is a nonprofit organization with the mission to save and improve the lives of people facing kidney failure by increasing the quality, speed, and number of living donor transplants while protecting all living donors.