The gift of life
An update on your investment in removing barriers to care for transplant recipients.

With no transplant center nearby, patients in Alaska who need a kidney transplant face a choice: travel hundreds of miles for surgery and extended recovery or be tethered to a dialysis machine for the rest of their life. (For those in liver failure, a transplant is the only option.) In other words, the price of living free from the burdens of kidney or liver disease is airfare and a month or two of rent in an apartment or hotel close to a hospital like Swedish. But not every Alaskan can make that investment in their health.

It’s only because of you that more patients are in a position to receive the life-changing gift of an organ transplant. Your philanthropic investment has removed the financial barriers that would otherwise disqualify them from the surgery that can give them a second chance.

As one of the closest transplant centers to Alaska, we’ve been sending a team of caregivers to Providence Alaska Medical Center for the past decade to evaluate patients for a kidney or liver transplant. Nephrologist Vijay Vidyasagar, M.D., along with a social worker and nurse colleague, travels to Anchorage to see patients who come from all over Alaska. “For a lot of these folks, just getting to Anchorage is a big deal,” says Dr. Vidyasagar. “Then the next challenge is to get them to Seattle.” That’s where you come in.

Your gifts to the patient assistance fund ensure that patients can travel and stay near the hospital during their recovery. Thanks to your generosity, physicians like Vijay Vidyasagar, M.D., reach more patients by removing financial hurdles to organ transplant care.
support, they can attend every follow-up appointment for the best start to life with a new organ. And four to six weeks later, they'll be ready to return home and continue to receive care locally from our partners at Providence.

Without a transplant, the statistics for those living with end-stage kidney and liver disease are bleak. Many patients waiting for a kidney will also develop diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease along the way. Less than 50% will survive five years of dialysis.¹ And in 2019, more than 1,200 people in the U.S. died waiting for a liver transplant.² But because of you, patients can choose life without worrying about the financial consequences.

Dr. Vidyasagar has seen firsthand the transformation a new kidney can bring. “There’s no bigger reward than to see my patients back to living a normal life,” he says. “They can see their children and grandchildren grow, and all of those life events are made possible because they were able to get a transplant.”

Although the team has been unable to travel to Alaska during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual visits have helped them bridge the gap to continue evaluating patients for transplant over the past year and a half.

You are giving the gift of life to more patients through your support of the patient assistance fund. Thank you.

¹ BMC Nephrology, 2020
² United Network for Organ Sharing

“More than a quarter of our patients now come from Alaska.” —VIJAY VIDYASAGAR, M.D.