



## **APPOINTMENT NOTICE**

**13TH JULY 2017**

### **NEW CHAIRMAN APPOINTED TO IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION**

The Irish Kidney Association (IKA) is delighted to announce the appointment of Mr. John Whelan S.C. as its new National Honorary Chairman. The outgoing Chairman, Ms. Valerie Brady completed her two-year term of office and has been elected as National Honorary Secretary, a role previously held by Mr. Whelan.

Mr. Whelan, who underwent a kidney transplant in 2008, has been a member of the Irish Kidney Association since 2006 when he and his wife Una joined their local East Dublin + Wicklow branch following his diagnosis of end-stage renal failure and his commencement in 2006 of dialysis treatment. They became actively involved in the local branch, and John was elected branch chairman in 2010, having been elected to the National Board in the previous year, after undergoing his deceased donor kidney transplant.

Mr. Whelan is a barrister and Senior Counsel by profession, and although now retired, still engages in the occasional practice of law. Over the past few years he served as legal adviser to the board of Self Help Africa and assisted in its merger process with Gorta.

In welcoming his appointment as Chairman of the Irish Kidney Association, Mr. Whelan said, "I am gratified and humbled to have been elected to lead the Irish Kidney Association over

the next two years. I believe the Association has a vital role to play in conjunction with the medical profession in promoting the overall welfare of those suffering from renal failure. My focus will be primarily the well-being of the patient, and my aim will be to help the Association to grow and to progress its essential work in the care and support of renal patients. In taking up my new post, I would like to especially acknowledge and thank the outgoing chairperson, Valerie Brady, for her work and dedication over the past two years”.

Mr. Whelan asserted, “The whole question of consent to organ donation has been a live issue over the past number of years and there have been varying viewpoints on how to promote and advance the level of donation. I believe that the key to progress in this regard is not through legislation but through developing the infrastructure and the training and placing of more organ donor coordinators in hospital intensive care units. Such programmes have been shown to significantly grow the rate of organ donation in other countries. A significant step in that direction has been the development of the HSE’s Organ Donation and Transplant Ireland (ODTI) under the expert guidance of Professor Jim Egan, a move which is greatly welcomed. I welcome the public consultation process in relation to legislation around consent for organ donation as announced by Minister for Health Simon Harris this week.”

Mr. Whelan, a native of Wexford, grew up in Blackrock, Co. Dublin and has been residing in Bray, Co Wicklow with his wife Una for 39 years.

The Irish Kidney Association has over 3,000 members and 25 branches nationwide, and its Head Office is in Donor House, Park West, Dublin D12 P5V6. The Association provides many forms of assistance and support- financial, emotional and practical to all kidney patients, their families and carers. The organisation is charged with the promotion and distribution of the organ donor card in Ireland, and, as part of this role, coordinates organ donor awareness activities on behalf of ODTI.

The Irish Kidney Association (IKA) welcomes Mr. Whelan’s stewardship of the organization and looks forward to working closely with him.