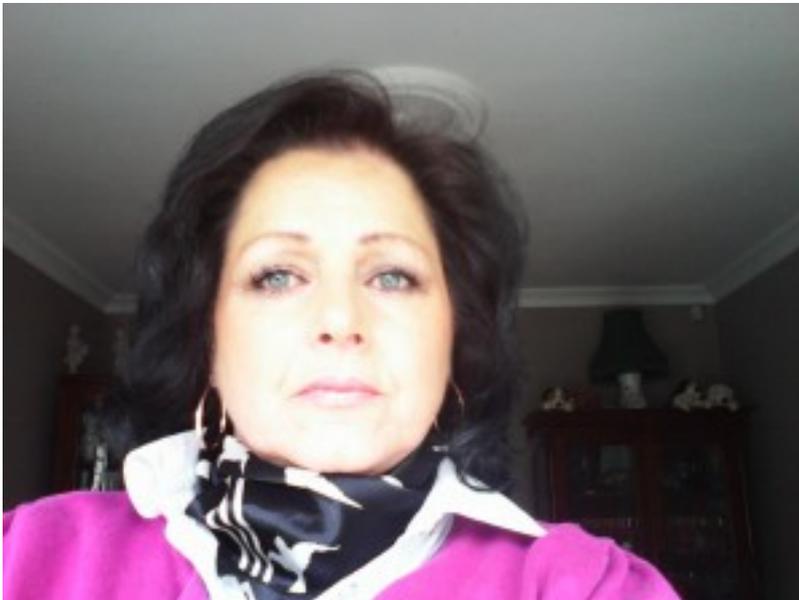


## Organ Donor Awareness Week



[www.ika.ie](http://www.ika.ie)



Maria Ryan

Maria Ryan from the Dunmore Road, Waterford has been receiving Haemodialysis treatment at Waterford Regional Hospital for the past three years following a kidney transplant failing which she had received 20 years previously. In 1990, Maria had three young children aged 7, 10 and 12, her kidney function failed and she commenced a form of home dialysis which she underwent for 14 months before being called for her life changing transplant. "I lived a healthy life for twenty years thanks to the kidney donation I received. It allowed me a second chance in life and to rear my children and give birth to my fourth child Nathan who is now in Leaving Cert year at school" said Maria Ryan.

Although she has been on dialysis for 3 years, she had to lose weight before being allowed to go on the transplant waiting list which means she has only been on the list for one year. "It's not a life being on dialysis, you are stuck to it 3 days a week every week for four hours a day, it has to be done, I don't have a choice" she said.

"You can't just go away on holiday, if you want to go anywhere even Cork or Dublin you have to organise with the hospital whether you can receive treatment while you are there".

"I would just like people to know that if you are thinking of organ donation then please do it; you are giving someone the chance of life".

From 29th March until 5th April, The Irish Kidney Association will be promoting Organ Donor Awareness Week.

Mr. Raymond Halligan, IKA Waterford branch chairman said "In 2013, 147 kidney transplants took place nationally. We want to raise awareness to the public the need for organ donors. People can now be donors through the new driver's license and we will be in various locations throughout the week handing out free donor cards"

"We ask the public to donate as generously as they can. 78% of all donations to IKA come from the public, we want to emphasize how important their donations are" he said.

The dialysis unit at Waterford Regional Hospital currently treats 92 patients.

During Organ Donor Awareness Week, Irish Kidney Association volunteers will be distributing organ donor cards and selling forget-me-not flower emblems at various locations including SuperValu, Tramore on Saturday 29th March and in Waterford City and county on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 3rd, 4th and 5th April. Proceeds raised will go towards the IKA's holiday apartments in Tramore which provide holiday accommodation for patients and their families.

By Sarah Leahy