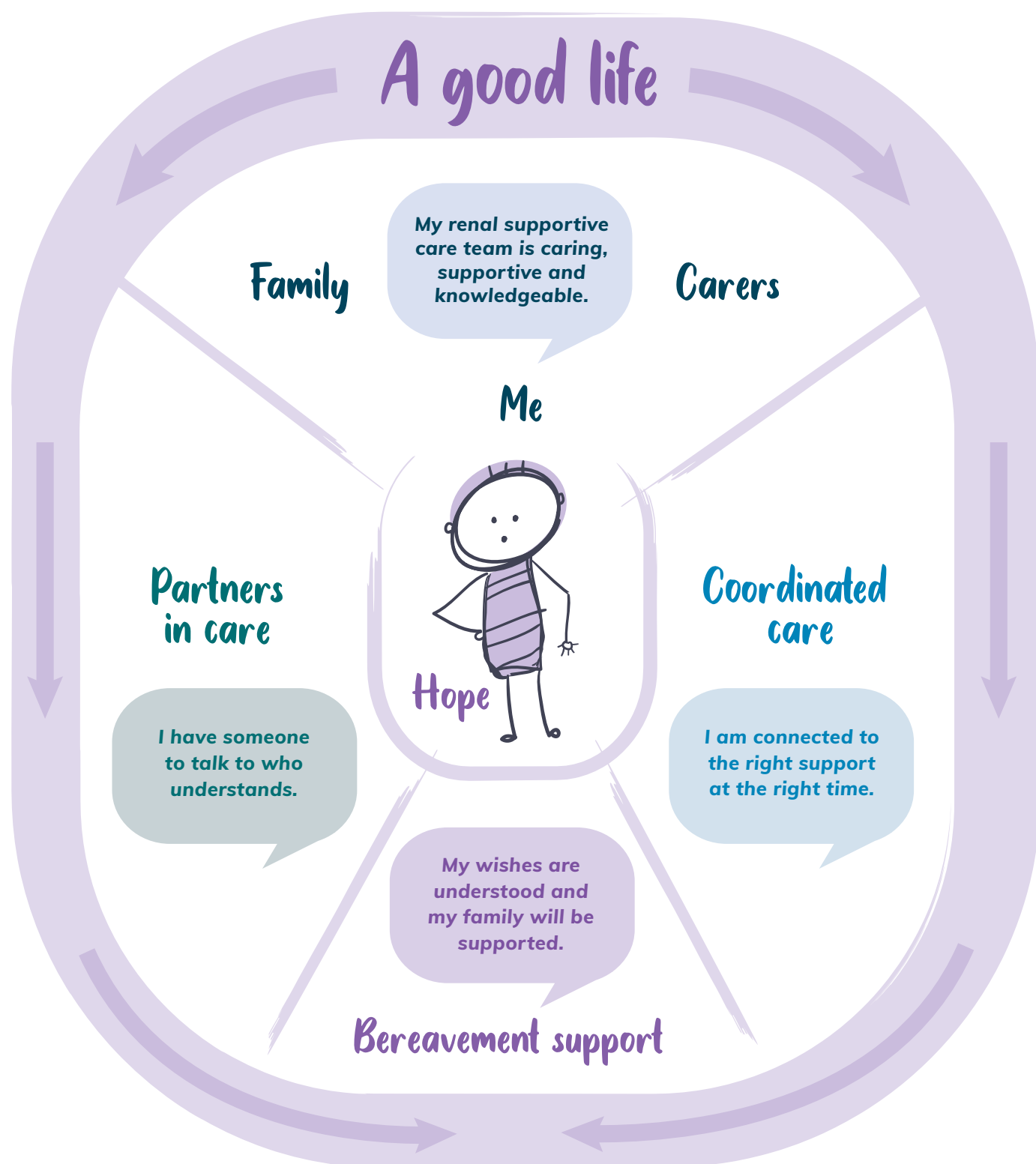


# Renal supportive care

Living well with kidney disease



## What is renal supportive care?

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is ongoing damage to your kidneys. As it progresses, your kidney (renal) team may refer you to renal supportive care (RSC).

This service supports you alongside the care provided by the renal team. RSC helps you achieve the best quality of life while living with kidney disease. It is a free and confidential service for you, your family members and carer(s).

The RSC team can help you with:

- physical symptoms – see the list on the final page of this document
- other emotional, mental, social, work or spiritual issues. For example, your kidney disease may cause you, your family or carer(s) to feel anxious or distressed.

**Patients and carers may need different RSC services at different times to help deal with any issues that come up.**

## Who is on the renal supportive care team?

The RSC team is coordinated by the RSC nurse and should include a dietitian and social worker. It may also include a doctor and other health professionals, as needed. This team will work closely with your kidney specialist (nephrologist) and general practitioner (GP).

Please call the RSC nurse if you have concerns or questions:

**Renal supportive care nurse name:**

**Phone number:**



*“Renal supportive care helps you achieve the best quality of life while living with kidney disease.”*

## Where is renal supportive care delivered?

RSC appointments may take place in a hospital, community clinic or at home. They may be in person, over the phone or by videoconference, depending on where you live and how you are going. The RSC team will help you to set up these appointments and assist you to use technology, if you need it.

Please let them know if you need an interpreter.

Your renal supportive care service is:

**Clinic times:**

**Further information:**

**Address details:**

If you need further information, please contact the RSC nurse (see details on page 2).

---

## Useful resources

### **Advance Care Planning**

Call 1300 208 582

[www.advancecareplanning.org.au](http://www.advancecareplanning.org.au)

### **Palliative Care Australia**

Call (02) 6232 0700

[www.palliativecare.org.au](http://www.palliativecare.org.au)

### **My Aged Care**

Call 1800 200 422

[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

## How can renal supportive care help?

**Every person who has kidney disease is different, which means your support will be designed for you. Your team will also provide support for your carer(s) or loved ones when needed.**

The RSC team can:

- listen, if you want to talk about your kidney disease and how it affects you and your family and carer(s), now and in the future
- suggest things that will improve your quality of life by managing your symptoms. They will then watch what works best for you
- counsel and assist with depression, anxiety, loneliness and other issues
- track your progress using some forms you may be asked to complete
- help you to identify symptoms that can be treated. Common symptoms of people living with kidney disease include:
  - itchy skin
  - restless legs
  - nausea (feeling like you're going to be sick)
  - vomiting (throwing up)
  - being unable to move very well or do things you used to be able to do
  - constipation or diarrhoea
  - feeling tired
  - feeling like you don't want to eat
  - sore or dry mouth
  - pain
  - shortness of breath
  - taste changes
- arrange for medication if you need it to help with your symptoms
- the dietitian will work with you to identify choices to relieve food-related symptoms and support your wellbeing
- support you to stay fit so you can do daily activities
- help you with Advance Care Planning when you are ready. This is so health professionals and your loved ones know how you would like to be cared for if you become too sick to speak for yourself
- coordinate your care with your kidney specialist, GP, aged-care facility, community nurse, other health professionals and other services, such as:
  - the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
  - My Aged Care
- offer bereavement support for loved ones.

### Acknowledgement

This document was developed by members of the Agency for Clinical Innovation's renal supportive care community, clinicians and consumers.