



They said it wouldn't last: Cheryl Green has lived with her mother's kidney for 43 years (and counting). Recently retired physician's assistant has thrived -- and given back -- since 1977 transplant.

Fast-forward 43 years to 2020. Mom's kidney is now 94, is getting a little tired and worn out and is starting to fail. Can't say I blame it – it outlived the original owner by eight years. (Mom died in 2012.)

I am currently on dialysis. My goal was to find a donor kidney before dialysis happened; the survival rate is better and the kidney functions longer if you transplant before the patient has to start dialysis. But that did not happen. Unfortunately, as a 64-year-old, I do not rocket to the top of the list. Because of the new rules regarding deceased donor kidneys, those of us who are older have less chance of getting one. (Research is showing this.) I've been on the list at the University of Pennsylvania for 5 years, and they frankly tell me that my best chance for transplant is to "find my own kidney." Okay.

I've been a PA for almost 37 years, a 1983 graduate of the Hershey Penn State PA program . I've practiced primary care and environmental health at the Lebanon VA Medical Center for over 30 years. I worked other part-time clinical jobs just to keep busy, serve on the board of the Kidney Foundation of Central Pennsylvania, have been the president of the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants, president of the local bargaining unit at the VA. I have several rescue dogs – the list goes on and on. I've lived a long and productive life, and I'm just not ready to check out.

It feels a little crazy to be doing this, but I'm no quitter, so here I am, looking for a kidney. The only requirements to donate is to be age 21-75 and in good health and have no new tattoos in the last year. I am type B positive blood, my mom was O positive, but that is not as important as it was in 1977. I can work with either type.

Anyone interested would be fully evaluated at Penn. You could be part of a kidney chain. If you have any interest, or inkling, or just want to know more about me or the process, please contact me through info@kfc.org.