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World's longest-surviving kidney-failure patient Dr. Robin Eady to receive Northwest Kidney Centers' Clyde Shields award

Seattle, WA (June 1, 2010): Suffering from severe kidney failure and about a week from death, London resident Robin Eady flew to Seattle in February 1963. He was so weak he had to be carried off the Boeing 707 as he prepared to become one of the world's first long-term dialysis patients.

Long-term dialysis treatment at the time was considered experimental. It had started only three years earlier when Dr. Belding Scribner at the University of Washington developed a shunt that would make it possible for patients to receive ongoing dialysis treatment. Dialysis replaces the function of healthy kidneys, removing wastes and extra fluid from the body. Prior to Scribner's invention, doctors couldn't repeatedly access a patient's bloodstream, meaning that only patients with short-term kidney failure could receive dialysis.

Doctors first implanted Scribner's shunt in the arm of machinist Clyde Shields in March 1960 and regular dialysis helped him survive another 11 years. Eady met Shields during his own early dialysis treatments in Seattle. Now Eady will receive an award named in honor of his former co-patient.

On June 22, 2010, Northwest Kidney Centers will present Dr. Robin Eady the Clyde Shields Distinguished Service Award, given to people who make significant contributions to the welfare of kidney patients through advocacy, clinical care or research. Eady, retired dean of dermatology at London's St. Thomas Hospital, is the world's longest-surviving person with kidney failure. Beginning at age 22 he underwent dialysis treatment for 24 years, and he has lived with a kidney transplant for 23 years, an unusually long time. He has been a vigorous and vocal advocate of living a full life despite chronic disease.

“You are an inspiration to many – patients, physicians, staff and people who know little about kidney failure,” Joyce F. Jackson, president and CEO of Northwest Kidney Centers, wrote to Dr. Eady notifying him that he would receive the award. “Your life journey demonstrates that through the benefits of home hemodialysis and transplantation an individual is able to overcome the challenges of kidney problems and contribute mightily to family, community, and to your professional field of medicine as well.”

Jackson notes that the award to Dr. Eady is especially fitting this year, which marks 50 years since Clyde Shields first received modern dialysis therapy with the Scribner shunt. “You are a link to our rich Seattle history and a testament that it is possible to thrive despite serious kidney disease,” she said.

“I feel highly honoured to be nominated for the Clyde Shields Award,” Eady wrote. “I am particularly touched because I have a vivid memory of starting my very first dialysis when Clyde was on the adjacent bed. His words of encouragement were, at the time, enormously comforting, especially when I had absolutely no idea of what was in store. I then met him frequently during subsequent treatment sessions.”

The young Eady, who had been healthy his entire life, learned he had kidney failure when he suffered from severe hypertension as a medical student in London. His health quickly deteriorated and doctors could do little to help him. Then one day while at the hairdresser, his mother read in *Life* magazine about the new treatment in Seattle. Eady’s family persistently pursued treatment for him in Seattle, where Dr. Scribner administered dialysis to him for four months. He then moved to Edmonton, Canada, to work as a renal technician and became one of the first in Canada to receive chronic dialysis treatment. After the treatment became available in England, he returned to London in December 1964 – again as one of the first to receive chronic dialysis treatment there.

Eady graduated from medical school in 1966 and specialized in dermatology. He returned to Seattle for a fellowship at the University of Washington in 1972, and along the way served as a pioneer for home hemodialysis before undergoing a kidney transplant in 1987. He retired in 2004 as dean of St. John’s Institute of Dermatology at St. Thomas’ Hospital in London.

While in Seattle, Dr. Eady will participate in two events open to patients, physicians and the community:

**Tuesday June 22, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., Northwest Kidney Centers SeaTac Pavilion,
17900 International Blvd. S., SeaTac: Rehabilitation Scholarship
Program/Presentation of Clyde Shields Award**

Dr. Eady will give a keynote speech and Northwest Kidney Centers will award its 2010 Rehabilitation Scholarships to dialysis patients wishing to further their education. The Clyde Shields Award will be presented to Dr. Eady by Clyde Shields’ sons, Tom and Jim Shields.

Sunday June 27, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Northwest Kidney Centers Seattle Kidney Center, 548 15th Ave., Seattle: “Home Dialysis and Transplant made it possible to live 47 years--A conversation with Dr. Robin Eady”

An event for those interested in home dialysis and other forms of treatment for kidney failure. U.S. Rep. Jay Inslee will also speak about the importance of laws that can support optimal care for dialysis and transplant patients. Tours of Seattle Kidney Center will be available.

About Northwest Kidney Centers. The nonprofit Northwest Kidney Centers provides the majority of dialysis care in King and Clallam counties, educates the public about kidney health, and collaborates with UW Medicine in the Kidney Research Institute. Northwest Kidney Centers’ staff of 550 delivers more than 200,000 treatments per year in 14 dialysis centers and 11 hospitals. It also maintains one of the country’s largest training and support programs for people who wish to give themselves dialysis at home. Northwest Kidney Centers patients receive kidney transplants about 67 percent more often than the national average. For more information, go to www.nwkidney.org.

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