

## Doug Hobbs - Renal Patient Advocate

If there is a bumper sticker on Doug Hobbs' car, it probably says he'd rather be golfing.



Doug is the patient advocate on the BC Renal Agency's executive committee, and vice president of the BC branch of the Kidney Foundation. And when he isn't busy with his renal responsibilities, chances are you'll find him on the fairways of the Royal Colwood Golf Club in Victoria, where Doug plays golf twice a week with his friend Ken Merkley. But a love of golf isn't the only thing these two share.

In 2000, Doug received a kidney, donated by his brother, in a transplant operation at St. Paul's Hospital. In the same week, Ken also received a kidney transplant at Vancouver General. However, the two men didn't actually meet until later, at a Kidney Foundation cheque presentation event in Victoria. When they discovered they both had kidney transplants and membership in the same golf club, a lasting friendship and regular rounds of golf were the inevitable outcome.

Receiving a kidney transplant marked a turning point in Doug's life. After living with diabetes for 52 years – he was diagnosed at age 12 – Doug was well aware that someday his kidneys might fail. And when they did, he made some decisions. He retired from his work in paper sales and became active with the Kidney Foundation, first as a director with the Victoria branch, then in subsequent years as vice president, president and past president.

He took on his patient advocacy role with the Renal Agency's executive committee last year. "It's like a well-oiled machine," says Doug, "run by experts dedicated to improving renal care in this province. My role is to make sure that the interests of patients are considered in all decisions."

Doug's commitment to the renal community is shared by his wife of 39 years, Maureen, who is the current president of the Kidney Foundation's Victoria chapter and works as director of care at a local retirement home. The Hobbs' family also includes a daughter who is finishing her Masters degree in social work at the University of Victoria, and a son who is a chef at the Bear Mountain Golf Club.

Three years ago, due to a diabetes-related complication, Doug's left leg was amputated below the knee. Walking with a prosthetic hasn't slowed him down though. In fact, he was a keen participant in the Kidney Foundation's recent Give the Gift of Life walk. "I completed two kilometres, so I'm quite proud of myself," says Doug. "I enjoyed every step."

He is also proud of an annual dinner, dance and silent auction event he started in 2001, called Kidneys on the Move. The event is held at the Royal Colwood Golf Club every March. "In nine years, with the support of family and friends, we've raised \$50 thousand for the Kidney Foundation," says Doug.

For anyone interested in attending the 10th anniversary of Kidney's on the Move in Victoria next March, you can contact Doug at [doughobbs@shaw.ca](mailto:doughobbs@shaw.ca).