

Kirsty

Kirsty is twenty years old and has chronic renal failure and currently has dialysis twice a week. She already has had two kidney transplants in the past, which have failed and have left her with very bad hypertrophic scarring on her abdomen. Kirsty is still on the waiting list for new transplant.

She lives with her mother and does not know her father as he left when she was very young. Therefore Kirsty and her mother are very close and she relies heavily on her mum.

A donor kidney becomes available and Kirsty is called to the hospital for her third kidney transplant. Her mum is excited and tries to encourage Kirsty by telling her “third time lucky”. Kirsty does not seem to share the enthusiasm and in fact is quite withdrawn because she is very much aware that this may not be successful and that she will have to go through so much including more scarring and possibly achieve very little as a result.

Kirsty and her mum arrive at the hospital and are met by the surgeon who after discussing the surgery asks Kirsty to sign her consent form. Kirsty signs the consent form but still remains very quiet and withdrawn. The surgeon tells Kirsty and her mum that he will see them both in theatre.

The theatre sends for Kirsty and she arrives in the anaesthetic room with her mum. Mum insists on coming to theatre with Kirsty. Mike the ODP greets Kirsty and her mum and proceeds to check Kirsty’s details. Mum answers all of Mike’s questions and Kirsty remains quite subdued. The surgeon at this time enters the anaesthetic room and discusses with mum that Kirsty will be going to HDU as there are staffing problems on the ward. Mike asks Kirsty if she is all right and she proceeds to cry and tells Mike that she does not want to go through with the transplant. Mike tries to reassure her and explains that he will speak to the anaesthetist. The anaesthetist arrives in the anaesthetic room and Mike proceeds to tell him what Kirsty has disclosed.

Kirsty's mum hears this and becomes furious with Kirsty telling her not to be so silly. Kirsty is very upset by this time and is adamant that she does not want the kidney transplant. The surgeon tries to console Kirsty but to no avail and then tells her that she needs to make a decision now as there are emergency cases piling up which need to be done and he is being pressurised by the other surgeons. Kirsty is so distressed and inconsolable and Mike tries to comfort her. The anaesthetist steps in and insists that Kirsty be given some time to consider her decision by going back to the ward.