

**STATEMENT BY HON. DR. OKOE BOYE BERNARD, MEMBER
OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE LEDZOKUKU CONSTITUENCY
ON WORLD KIDNEY DAY**

I'm most grateful to you, Rt. Hon. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to make this statement in celebration of "**WORLD KIDNEY DAY**". The 8th of March, each year is celebrated as World Kidney Day as a means of raising awareness about the important role our kidneys play in the overall health of the human body and to bring attention to the conditions that are most popular for causing Kidney Disease.

Mr. Speaker, the kidneys are bean-shaped organs about the size of a fist that sit opposite each other on both the left and right side of the body. (i.e. **Each individual has a pair of kidneys**).

The kidneys perform the important role of processing waste and getting it out of the body in the form of urine. Any condition of the kidney that makes it unable to process and remove waste from the body is referred to as **Kidney Disease** or "**Renal Failure**".

Mr. Speaker, there are many causes of kidney disease but the three most important of public health concerns are:

- I. Hypertension
- II. Diabetes
- III. Abuse of herbal preparations

Rt. Hon. Speaker, the theme for World Kidney Day-2018 is "**YOUR KIDNEY HEALTH, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**". The theme is most appropriate because the majority of Kidney Diseases in this country are caused by undiagnosed, untreated Hypertension as well as undiagnosed or untreated Diabetes.

The result for not getting Hypertension treated over a significant period is Kidney damage and for that matter Kidney Disease.

Diabetes Mellitus has great potential to damage our kidneys when not treated and the potential is further enhanced when Diabetes co-exists with Hypertension in the same individual.

The cost of managing both Hypertension and Diabetes is so cheap compared to the cost of managing Kidney Disease. Mortality rate (**i.e. Deaths due to disease**) is high in Kidney disease compared to hypertension and diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, it is against this background that on World Kidney Day we say firmly that, your kidney health is your responsibility. It is your responsibility to get your blood pressure checked and your blood sugar measured. When you do not get some of these medical screenings done, you jeopardize your kidney health and put your life at risk.

I am happy to note that the Rt. Hon. Speaker, together with the leadership of Parliament, has given permission to the **Ghana Kidney Association** to check the blood pressure and blood sugar of all parliamentarians and parliamentary staff today, Wednesday, 7th March 2018 between the hours of **8am** and **3pm** at the **Parliamentary Clinic** in the Job 600 building. The medical team from the Ghana Kidney Association would also check for proteins in the urine, the single most important test required to diagnose kidney disease.

Mr. Speaker only ten percent (**10%**) of those with Kidney Diseases in Ghana know of their status, the rest including most of us in this chamber, myself inclusive, do not know whether we have it or not since early stages of Kidney Disease come with no symptoms at all; I repeat early symptoms of Kidney disease come with **ZERO** symptoms.

That is why I commend the Rt. Hon. Speaker and leadership of parliament for permitting all Parliamentarians and Parliamentary staff to get screened for kidney disease and two of the most notorious causes of the condition.

Some symptoms of kidney disease include dry and itchy skin, chronic fatigue (**ie. Feeling tired always**), swelling of the feet always, etc.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, the message on World Kidney Day is this; don't wait till you see these symptoms before you act, because at the time you see those, it might be significantly late.

Mr. Speaker, again I'm most grateful to you for the opportunity and would like to conclude by urging all members to make it a point to get screened today before exiting the premises of Parliament.

Thank you Right Hon. Speaker.