

## **“My glass is half full – never half empty” – a patient story**

*By Thomas Hunziker, ADPKD patient, patient representative and foundation board member*



My name is Thomas Hunziker, I am 68 years old and I live with **ADPKD**, a hereditary condition in which cysts develop in the kidneys over time. These cysts enlarge the kidneys, impair their function and lead many patients to kidney failure.

**“ADPKD accompanies you throughout your life – but life remains worth living.”**

After a difficult period and overwhelming fatigue, I received a kidney at the age of 50 from my former business partner.

**“The transplantation was a relief for me and my family.”**

Just a few weeks later, I returned to work and became involved with the Swiss Kidney Patients’ Association and the Swiss Kidney Foundation.

In the years following the transplant, I experienced numerous health setbacks: heart problems, diabetes, breast cancer, infections, surgeries and finally a bowel perforation. Despite all this, my attitude remained the same:

**“When receiving a new diagnosis, my first thought is always: how can I live with it?”**

Since November 2023, I have been back on dialysis, now three times per week. The care in Affoltern is excellent – and nonetheless, I refuse to feel restricted.

I have already received dialysis in Germany, Austria, Denmark, France, South Tyrol and Ticino. Travelling remains possible – with a bit more planning, but just as much joy.

What has sustained me all these years is my fundamental attitude:

**“My glass is never half empty – at worst, half full.”**

Today, I live more consciously and intensely. It touches me deeply that my daughters are also genetically affected, but we walk this path together.

A crucial point for me is medical care. Over the years, I have met physicians in whom I developed deep trust.

**“Good care makes a huge difference for us as patients.”**

Many patients tell me about constantly changing contact persons – something I wish for no one.



My goal is clear:

**“Reaching 100 would be nice – but with a healthy mind.”**

Until then, I continue to rely on my resilience and my humor:

**“I have seven lives like a cat. I’ve used three, four remain.”**

This means not only humour but also experience. I have learned to overcome setbacks, get back up again and continue. Each of these “used” lives represented something difficult – but also something I overcame. And that is exactly why I believe I will master the next challenges as well.

*To the full – or at least half-full – glass!*