



KIDNEYS R US

NEWSLETTER

Dialysis 101

Each year in the United States, over 100,000 people are diagnosed with Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD Stage 5) also known as End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). These people were often unaware of their kidney disease prior to being admitted to a hospital and diagnosed with kidney failure.

Many patients who are diagnosed with CKD Stage 5 aren't aware of their treatment options or how they can access those options. They may be upset with the diagnosis of kidney failure and not able to absorb the information provided to them by their new kidney doctor (nephrologist), nurses or social workers. They may also be in need of emergency dialysis and their nephrologist will have a catheter placed in their chest for hemodialysis as this is often the best choice under these circumstances.

A hospitalization can be a very stressful time for people and being diagnosed with kidney failure can be traumatic. It is important that these individuals have someone who they trust who can support them and listen to the doctors and nurses during the hospitalization. That support person can find out about treatment options when the newly diagnosed individual isn't able to really "hear" the information provided.

Some individuals are aware of their kidney disease and are seeing a nephrologist in a medical office. These patients may have been educated by the nephrologist on the treatment options available to them. They are often able to make a choice based on their lifestyle needs as they have the time to review all options. Nonetheless, beginning dialysis can be very upsetting for these individuals just as it can be for the individuals diagnosed during a hospitalization.

Once an individual becomes a renal or dialysis patient, they enter into a "new normal" lifestyle that includes dialysis. They become connected to a dialysis facility or clinic that will meet their needs.

- Some patients will decide to go to an out-patient hemodialysis facility;
- Others will opt for home hemodialysis; and
- Some will decide that peritoneal dialysis (PD) is best for them.

Whatever choice they make, they will have to work with a team of healthcare providers whose job it is to make sure these patients receive the best quality of care possible to meet their medical needs.

The dialysis team consists of:

- The nephrologist
- nurses
- patient care technicians
- social workers
- dietitians

They will work with dialysis patients to establish a Plan of Care (POC) that will best meet each individual's needs.

The POC will set up goals for:

- vascular access placement
- medication management
- weight management
- anemia management
- type of dialysis
- transplant
- diet recommendations
- psychosocial concerns

Each member of the team will help patients set realistic goals that can be reached. Once the goals are set, patients will work with the team members to create a routine that will help to achieve the goals.

Out-patient hemodialysis patients will usually receive four hours of dialysis three times per week. Education will be provided to help patients understand the need for this amount of treatment and the benefits of sticking to the schedule set-up by their nephrologist.

Home dialysis patients will also have a team that will train them for home self-care. This team will regularly remain in contact with home patients to monitor outcomes and ensure the home situation remains safe for the patients.

Dialysis patients are not alone in any treatment option they choose. No one option is best for all people. Each patient needs to choose the best option for their lifestyle. Remember, dialysis team members are there to help!



Patient Voices

How's Your R&R (Respectful & Responsible) Dialysis Health Center?

By Jordan Silverman

My non-profit dialysis facility, DCI (Freehold, NJ) is hopefully similar, in some ways, to your Respectful and Responsible Dialysis Health Center; they are definitely respectful, responsible, caring, ethical, warm hearted and more.

It's not just your existing treatment staff who cares so much about you. When you have the chance to meet up with a former nurse or tech (who's now somewhere else, and stops by), both you and they will become so happy to see each other. It's not because of memory from all the time they spent caring for you, but the time you spent getting to know each other, becoming friends and sharing personal interests with each other.

Sue, my social worker, is incredibly protective of issues that may develop between you and Medicare or the American Kidney Fund or any other party. You can also discuss with Sue any questions or, if necessary, discuss any issues. She is more than glad to help resolve anything that's bothering you.

Ann, the dietitian, keeps on top of what you are eating. Presenting you with a monthly report card, she'll show you what you may need to eat more of, or cut back on, in the next month. Also, if you're drinking too much, she'll let you know. At any time, if you have any question about how ANY food affects your diet, she'll access her sources to find the most detailed information about the food you're asking about and the impact it can have on your body.

And of course, you have Gloria, the Nurse Manager. She is an incredibly warm hearted Nurse Manager. No questions asked, she cares, respects and is quite ethical in her Respectful and Responsible Dialysis Health Center and with its patients. She wants to do things to prevent issues from developing. She furthers the education of her new patients, so they know how to take care of their temporary catheters, and their new fistulas or grafts.

Haiping, the Nurse Practitioner, is the newest, and she's amazing. Her ease and ability to discuss medical issues is outstanding. Her demeanor and how she's always caring about you, wanting to make sure that you remain in the healthiest state possible, is unbelievable.

On the treatment floor, where dialysis is performed, the nurses and techs are similar to the other staff, but because you spend more time with them, you see and experience their care, ethics, respect, responsibility and warm hearted behavior. It's not just the staff that you can develop a relationship/friendship with, it's the patients (and/or their families too). The patients, like the staff are caring, respectful, and warm hearted.

Thank you to all the staff and fellow patients at DCI Freehold

JOIN THE PAC

The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) for QIRN3 consists of dialysis patients, transplant patients and family members of those patients. The committee meets once every two months to discuss issues relevant to ESRD patients. The PAC members have a genuine concern for quality of care issues and encourage patients to be involved in their healthcare. They are willing to share skills and experience with others. Each facility is encouraged to have a PAC representative. Talk to your social worker to volunteer!

Call toll free 1-888-877-8400 to join the PAC.

To File a Grievance Regarding your Dialysis Care please contact:

QIRN3

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The analyses upon which this publication is based were performed under Contract Number HHSM-500-2017NW00003C, entitled "End Stage Renal Disease Network Organization Number 3", sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services. The conclusions and opinions expressed, and methods used herein are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the ideas presented. This article is a direct result of the Health Care Quality Improvement Program initiated by CMS, which has encouraged identification of quality improvement projects derived from analysis of patterns of care, and therefore required no special funding on the part of this contractor. Ideas and contributions to the author concerning experience in engaging with issues presented are welcomed.