

April 2014



Quality Insights Renal Network 3

Serving New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands

Kidneys R Us

FROM THE
QIRN3 PATIENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Patient Engagement at the Dialysis Facility

What exactly is Patient Engagement? This is a term that we are now hearing in the dialysis community. Patient engagement may be defined differently from patient to patient or provider to provider. Some may define patient engagement as empowering patients to become educated about their healthcare needs and treatment options. Others may define patient engagement as having patients become part of the healthcare team and the decisions that are made regarding their healthcare needs. Each of these definitions is accurate. Patient engagement can be looked at from different perspectives; however, the goal is to make the patient the center of the healthcare team and a shared decision-maker.

Years ago, the patient was not viewed as a member of the healthcare team. He/she was a passive voice in the decision-making. Over time, this view of the doctor as the decision-maker and the patient as the acceptor of the decision began to be questioned. The availability of the Internet made it easier for patients to learn about their diseases and treatment options. Patients began to ask more questions. They wanted to have a greater voice in the decisions about their own lives. They were able to discuss their ability to follow a prescribed treatment course with their healthcare team. Physicians and healthcare providers began to see a benefit to this type of patient involvement. Patients who were more engaged in their care had better outcomes. Options were reviewed and the best plan for the individual patient was created. Patients followed the treatment plan because they helped create it.

The concept of patient engagement is now a focus of all dialysis providers. Medicare has tasked the 18 Renal Networks throughout the United States to work with all dialysis providers to make patient engagement a focus of the care provided.

At Network 3 (serving New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands), we are working with facilities on a program called “*en-GAGE*”. This program outlines four “pillars” or principles of a successful patient engagement strategy. The participating facilities will complete tasks required in each pillar to help them to better assess their level of patient engagement. They will also have to develop strategies to increase patient engagement in all areas of the facility’s operations. Once all four of the pillars are completed, the participating facility will receive a certificate of accomplishment from Network 3.

Network 3 is also working with patients on our Patient Learning and Action Network (LAN) and our Patient Advisory Committee (PAC). We are creating educational plans with input from our patient committees. The educational campaigns for 2014 are: *Coping with the Challenges of Dialysis* and *Increasing Patients’ Physical Activity and Well-Being*. Each of these campaigns will be introduced in at least 30 facilities throughout the Network. Network 3 staff will review the results of the campaigns to see if they have been successful and will then spread the educational materials out to all patients at the end of the year. The goal is to assist patients with learning new strategies to help with their overall adjustment to dialysis. Our hope is this will make it easier for patients to engage in their healthcare decision-making.

Some patients may not feel up to fully engaging with their healthcare team. For these patients, their families can become their “voice” and advocate for them. The important thing to remember is, the patient’s needs have to be considered when developing their individual plan of care.

What is the Medicare Quality Incentive Program (QIP)?

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) made a rule in 2010 that connected payment to dialysis providers to the quality of care they provided to patients. This new system began by measuring certain quality standards in 2011 and giving dialysis facilities scores in 2012. Those scores decided whether the dialysis facility received full payment for meeting the quality standards.

Each dialysis facility is required to post their QIP score in an area where patients can see it. The new scores are posted at the beginning of each year. The score for 2014 was based on the facility performance in 2012. The score determines whether your facility will receive full payment from Medicare in 2014.

CMS has finalized three clinical measures and three reporting measures for the Payment Year 2014 QIP. The three clinical measures are:

1. Anemia Management (Hemoglobin levels)
2. Dialysis Adequacy (How clean the blood is after treatment)

3. Type of vascular access, which encourages the use of fistulas and discourages the use of catheters because of the high rate of infections and complications associated with catheter use.

The three reporting measures will capture whether a facility:

1. Reports dialysis infection events to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network.
2. Surveys patients to learn about their experience of care.
3. Monitors patients for abnormalities in phosphorus and calcium levels.

Dialysis providers across the country are working to make sure their facilities meet or exceed the performance measures. Look for your facility's score to see how well your facility performed. Ask your facility administrator if you have questions about the QIP Score that is posted in your dialysis unit.

Patient Learning and Action Network

We invite you to join our patient committee, and share your very unique ideas and experiences. Partnered with Quality Insights Renal Network 3, the Patient and Family Focused Learning and Action Network (LAN) has been designed to provide patients, and their family members, with an opportunity to influence the future of the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) community. The LAN members, also known as Subject Matter Experts (SME), will share a voice beyond that of their own, as they will be leaders within the renal community. We invite you to join our LAN and share those ideas with us. You'll see how you too can make a difference. Come and be a part of the action! Meetings are held as toll-free conference calls. Please call 1-888-877-8400 to join the LAN.

**To file a Grievance
please contact QIRN3**
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Cranbury, NJ 08512
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Fax: 609-490-0835
Email: qirn3@nw3.esrd.net

We're on the
Web!
www.qirn3.org

JOIN THE PAC TODAY!

The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) for QIRN3 consists of dialysis patients and those who have received transplants. The committee meets quarterly 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.

