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Quality Insights Renal Network 3

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



Kidneys R Us

FROM THE
QIRN3 PATIENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Travel and Dialysis

Many dialysis patients feel they will never be able to travel due to their need for treatment. This is not true! Peritoneal dialysis patients can take their supplies with them when they travel or have a cyclor sent to their travel destination. Home hemodialysis patients can take their machine with them if necessary. But what happens for the patient who receives hemodialysis at an out-patient center?

Travel is possible for out-patient hemodialysis patients as well. It just requires some advance planning and coordination with your facility social worker. Traditional Medicare Part B will pay anywhere in the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It will cover the 80% that it pays at your home dialysis center. Patients will need to either pay the 20% or have their secondary insurance billed for the 20% that Medicare doesn't cover. Unfortunately, NJ Medicaid will only pay in NJ. Any dialysis care provided outside of the state of NJ will not be covered by Medicaid and would be the financial responsibility of the patient.

Medicare Advantage plans or private insurance plans that are an HMO or PPO may require the use of in-network providers or referrals from your primary care physician. Patients will need to check in advance with their insurance carrier to determine whether or not they have restrictions on care provided out of their home state or insurance network.

Patients need to determine exactly what dates they will be traveling and what is their destination. You need to write out an itinerary and speak

with your social worker. Your social worker will assist you in locating facilities in the area where you will be traveling. He/she will make a contact call to either the facility or the corporate travel center to begin the process of arranging your *transient* hemodialysis treatments. Patients will need to provide copies of their insurance cards to ensure the current information is available. Most facilities require current monthly lab work with a hepatitis antigen test. Some will require a current TB test or chest x-ray. Your social worker will let you know what tests need to be completed in order to arrange your transient treatments.

The best way to ensure a smooth process is to plan in advance. It is usually helpful to begin the process at least 6 weeks in advance of your travel. If you plan to go to a heavily visited location such as the beach areas in summer, you should let your social worker know further in advance. Otherwise, you may have to travel a longer distance to get to an available out-patient hemodialysis center. As always, transportation to the transient dialysis center is the responsibility of the patient.

Some patients enjoy cruising as a travel option. These vacations are run by private companies and payment is arranged with the company. The costs for dialysis on the cruise ship can be expensive. Some patients arrange for dialysis at the locations where the ship will be docked. If cruising is your style, don't let dialysis crimp it!

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Traveling can be a great experience and provide welcome relief to the normal routine of life. It can lift your spirits and give you a fresh outlook on your life. Don't feel you can't travel because you are on dialysis.

Proper planning and the assistance from your facility staff can help make it happen.

Safe travels and enjoy the journey!

Please visit: www.dialysisatsea.com
www.dialysisfinder.com
www.medicare.gov/dialysis

What Does Patient Engagement Mean?

Patient engagement is an important idea that is no longer considered a new idea. Patients should now be considered a part of the dialysis team. The other members of the team; the nephrologist, the nurse, the dietitian and the social worker all work with the patient to develop a treatment plan that works best for the patient. Patient engagement is a part of the philosophy of patient centered care. The Forum of ESRD Networks Beneficiary Advisory Committee's definition reads: "Patient centered care is patient driven healthcare delivered in a way that is focused on an individual patient's values and preferences and involves both sharing information and active shared decision-making with patients, families/caregivers, and medical professionals to reach customized, individualized, and realistically obtainable goals of care. This is an ongoing process, keeping in mind these goals may change over time."

Patients are encouraged to talk to their dialysis team to make the team aware of their individual needs and goals. Once these are identified, the patient has to work with the team to create a Plan of Care (POC) that will include ways to meet these needs and goals. Some patients may have set a goal to receive a kidney transplant. The dialysis team can assist the patient in beginning the process of getting listed for either a living donor or deceased donor transplant. The patient, as a part of the team, will have to follow through with the referral to the transplant hospital. He/she will need to work with the dialysis team to set up a plan that will enable him/her to complete the transplant work-up and ultimately receive a transplant.

The same is true for any other goal the patient may set for themselves. It could be dialysis related goal such as moving towards home dialysis. It could also be a personal goal such as completing education, attending a family wedding or going on a long planned vacation. The important thing is for the patient to become engaged with the dialysis team and identify his/her needs and goals. This will help to ensure the POC reflects these needs and goals and identifies steps to attain them!

Patient engagement is here to stay. Become an engaged member of your dialysis team! The more you know about your healthcare POC, the more you can participate to reach the goals you have set.

To file a Grievance Regarding your Dialysis Care please contact:

QIRN3
Cranbury Gates Office Park
109 South Main Street, Suite 21
Cranbury, NJ 08512
Phone: 888-877-8400 (toll-free)
Fax: 609-490-0835
Email: qirn3@nw3.esrd.net

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.

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