



IPRO ESRD Network of the South Atlantic Provider Insider

May 2020

Dear Dialysis Provider,

IPRO ESRD Network of the South Atlantic understands that dialysis organizations, staff, and patients are facing unprecedented times to implement strategies for their safety and the safety of others during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we adapt to new normals in the fight against COVID-19, the Network is committed to providing dialysis facilities and patients with information, resources, and best practices in the following areas:

- COVID-19 educational opportunities, treatment safety, and resources on safely traveling to and from dialysis treatments
- Information on the benefits and usage of telemedicine
- Reducing healthcare-acquired infections
- Education about:
 - The importance of long-term catheter removal
 - Transplant, multi-listing, and the use of expanded criteria donors
 - Home modalities to stimulate patient choice of treatment options
- Support for Mental Health, improving the grievance process and virtually or telephonically connecting to support Patient and Family Engagement
- Support for CROWNWeb, the National Healthcare Safety Network, the ESRD QIP, Dialysis Facility Compare, Star Ratings, and Dialysis Facility Reports
- Emergency Planning and Preparedness

Please feel free to reach out to the Network with any support questions or needs.

Emergency Management Notice

In preparation for the Atlantic hurricane season which runs from June 1st to November 30th, the ESRD Network has released the **Annual Critical Asset Survey (CAS)** to all dialysis facilities in the service area. The purpose of the CAS is to identify facility and patient needs ahead of an impending emergency or disastrous event. Your participation and completion of the CAS will support state and local emergency management officials with expediting resources and assist with maintaining and/or re-establishing operations that affect ESRD patients' access to medical care.



An above-normal Atlantic hurricane season is expected, according to the National Weather Center. As we continue to focus our attention on a safe and healthy reopening of our country, it remains critically important that we also remember to make the necessary preparations for the upcoming hurricane season. Social distancing and other CDC guidance to keep patients and staff safe from COVID-19 may impact the emergency preparedness plan your facility had in place and keeping in mind that your facility may need to revise and adjust your current emergency plan.

- One completed survey is required of each dialysis unit and is due back to the Network no later than **June 10th, 2020**.
 - **Georgia** Critical Asset Survey [Link](#)
 - **North Carolina** Critical Asset Survey [Link](#)
 - **South Carolina** Critical Asset Survey [Link](#)
 - Please visit the CDC's website for additional guidance when Preparing for Hurricanes During the COVID-19 Pandemic:
<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/prepare-for-hurricane.html>
 - For additional COVID-19 resources for patients and providers, please visit the ESRD network website:
<https://network6.esrd.ipro.org/>
-

Reducing Bloodstream Infections

Frontline Staff Toolkit for Outpatient Hemodialysis Facilities

All facilities should continue to be vigilant in their response to COVID-19 and ensure that they have robust screening and management processes in place as well as staff having the education and resources to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus with the facility. The CDC has released 3 short videos as part of the Frontline Staff Toolkit for Outpatient Hemodialysis Facilities. Your facility will receive in early June a short survey via RedCap to assess their knowledge and practice around the management of Infection Prevention, Personal Protective Equipment, and Screening & Patient Placement as well as providing additional information on how to protect your staff and patients. .



- CDC Introduction Video 1: Infection Prevention Basics Tips [Recording](#)
- CDC Introduction Video 2: Personal Protective Equipment Tips [Recording](#)
- CDC Introduction Video 3: Screening & Patient Placement Tips [Recording](#)

CDC Core Interventions

The Core Interventions have been proven to reduce dialysis bloodstream infections. Utilizing these interventions along with audit tools and checklists are intended to promote CDC-recommended practices for infection prevention in dialysis facilities. The audit tools and checklists can be used when assessing staff practices. They can also be used by staff to help guide their own practice.

- For more information, please visit the CDC [Core Interventions](#) webpage.

PAC Speaks – My Life is in Your Hands: Please Wash Them!

Infections are the second leading cause of death in patients with ESRD. Engaging patients as active partners with infection prevention strategies can reduce their risk. This Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) Newsletter reflects a patient's experience with infection and provides an insightful look at the impact of bloodstream infection from a patient's point of view. Please share this informational newsletter with staff and patients.

- PAC Speaks [Newsletter](#)
-

Increasing the use of Home Modalities

Home Dialysis Toolkit

As a nation, we are being faced with new and uncertain realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has challenged all facets of the healthcare system in unprecedented ways. We know that ESRD patients are more vulnerable to COVID-19–related morbidity and mortality than other population groups. In-center dialysis patients are at a higher risk of viral transmission due to frequent visits for dialysis treatments, limited distancing between patients, and frequent interactions with healthcare providers. Taking these factors into consideration, ESRD patients can benefit from receiving dialysis treatments at home and are considered to be at an advantage over their in-center hemodialysis counterparts.

As a result, the ESRD Network has developed the **Home Dialysis Toolkit** that will provide your facility with resources and tools that can be utilized to educate patients and help them explore available home modality treatment options that best suit their needs and lifestyle.

- Access the [Home Dialysis Toolkit](#) on our webpage.

Telehealth for ESRD Providers

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has broadened access to Medicare telehealth services so that beneficiaries can receive a wider range of services from their physicians without having to travel to a healthcare facility. These policy changes build on the regulatory flexibilities granted under the President’s emergency declaration. CMS is expanding these benefits on a temporary and emergency basis under the 1135 waiver authority and **Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act**.

There is an urgency to expand the use of the telehealth technology to assist people who need routine care, and keep vulnerable beneficiaries and beneficiaries with mild symptoms in their homes while maintaining access to the care they need. Limiting community spread of the virus, as well as limiting the exposure to other patients and staff members will continue to help slow viral spread.

Review and share the following telehealth resources with staff and patients to slow the spread and stay healthy!

- Telehealth for ESRD Providers [Resource](#)
- ESRD Provider Telehealth and Telemedicine [Toolkit](#)
- The Benefits of Telehealth Patient [Resource](#)
- A Patient’s Guide to Telemedicine [Link](#)





Improve Transplant Coordination Kidney Transplant Toolkit

The ESRD Network has compiled a series of tools and resources to help you move patients towards the steps towards transplant defined as (1) assess patient interest towards transplant, (2) make a referral to the transplant center, (3) patient's first visit to the transplant center, (4) transplant center work-up process, and (5) patient added to the transplant wait list or waiting for a living donor. The toolkit includes a patient tracker for transplant steps, educational resources in English and Spanish, a treatment options interest form, referral tools for providers, transplant appointment checklist, and tools to help you celebrate achievements such as waitlisting and transplantation.

- Access the [Transplant Toolkit](#) on our webpage.

2020 Kidney and Pancreas Transplantation and Living Kidney Donation Conference

The University of Virginia Health System is offering the *2020 Kidney and Pancreas Transplantation and Living Kidney Donation Conference* through Web Streaming on June 25th! This conference offers 5.5 CEUs and will be covering several hot topics about transplant.

- Conference [agenda & registration](#)
-

Peer Mentoring Resources



Peer Mentor Virtual Training

The IPRO ESRD Network Program has a virtual training for Peer Mentors that can come handy when in-person training cannot be completed. You may have very motivated patients that need formal training before connecting to others; use our program to get them started!

- Learn more about Peer Mentoring Programs on our [website](#).
- Review [e-University LMS Platform](#) for Peer Mentors virtual training

Peer Mentoring Virtual Interactions Handout

While many are practicing social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, social support has become extremely important. Peer Mentors can be the support that many mentees need. Use this handout to support mentor-mentee virtual interactions during the pandemic.

- Peer Mentoring Virtual Interactions [Handout](#).

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May, Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network (MHTTC) joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. MHTTC has released the following presentation "*Psychological First Aid (PFA) - For Those Affected By The COVID-19 Pandemic*" to support affected individuals and help them mobilize their natural, adaptive coping strategies.

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-informed prevention strategy aimed at reducing distress and increasing resilience during and following mass disasters, including natural disasters and pandemics. The Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network is a great resource to find tools and presentations in addressing mental health both professionally and personally. For more information, please visit the MHTTC [website](#).

- Psychological First Aid: Increasing Resiliency During COVID-19 [Recording](#)
- Psychological First Aid: Increasing Resiliency During COVID-19 [Slides](#)
- Psychological First Aid For The COVID-19 Pandemic [Quick Reference Guide](#)



For questions or comments, please submit a Customer Support Ticket at:
<http://help.esrd.ipro.org/support/tickets/new>

IPRO ESRD Network of the South Atlantic

909 Aviation Parkway, Suite 300, Morrisville, NC 27560

Phone: 919-463-4500 | Fax: 919-388-9637 | Toll-Free: 800-524-7139

Email: ESRDNetwork6@ipro.us | [Visit Our Website](#)

This message was written, designed, and distributed by IPRO ESRD Network of the South Atlantic while under contract with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. CMS Contract Number: HHSM-500-2016-00006C