



I PRO ESRD Network of New England — Empowering More than 15,000 Renal Patients in 6 States



End-Stage Renal Disease
Network of New England

network1.esrd.ipro.org

Provider Insider

AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER FOR RENAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

August 2020

Provider Insider is a monthly electronic newsletter for renal care professionals that provides general information, upcoming events, and educational resources that are beneficial to both patients and providers within the ESRD community we serve.

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Upcoming Events

See what's happening this [month](#).

Alerts and Recalls

Visit the [KCER Coalition website](#) for the latest alerts and recalls.

COVID-19 Resources for Professionals and Patients

COVID-19 resources can be accessed on the Network website by clicking the icons below.



[Join Our Mailing List](#)

Announcements & Updates

End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Incentive Program (ESRD QIP) Payment Year (PY) 2021 Preview Period

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Incentive Program (ESRD QIP) reminds you that the **Payment Year (PY) 2021 ESRD QIP Preview Period**, which opened on Wednesday, July 29, 2020, will **end August 31, 2020, at 11:59 p.m., Pacific Time (PT)**. If your organization has not already done so, CMS recommends that every organization take the following steps:

- Facility or Corporate Viewers and Points of Contact (POCs) should access and review the facility's Preview Performance Score Report (PSR), available through the ESRD QIP User Interface (UI) in the [ESRD Quality Reporting System \(EQRS\)](#).
- Facility and Corporate POCs should submit inquiries regarding the facility's PY 2021 scores before the Preview Period concludes.

CMS will evaluate all inquiries and make any necessary adjustments to facility measure scores before finalizing Total Performance Scores and applicable payment reductions. Facilities will continue to receive responses to their inquiries via the ESRD QIP UI in [EQRS](#) after the close of the Preview Period.



Inpatient Medical Director Toolkit Now Available!

The National Forum of ESRD Networks has released an Inpatient Medical Director Toolkit as a reference tool that provides information about the care of patients with kidney failure in the hospital setting.

Click [here](#) to view the toolkit.



Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane season has just begun, and the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season is off to a quick start with three named storms (Arthur, Bertha, and Cristobal). Forecasters predict that oceanic and atmospheric conditions in the Atlantic will be favorable for a more active than usual hurricane season in the months ahead.

At a Glance Facts

- Bertha made landfall an hour after it formed
- Cristobal was the earliest "C" storm on record and its remnants tracked to Wisconsin
- All three storms brought impacts on the U.S.

Be Prepared! Plan Ahead.

Get prepared now and know what you're going to do in the event of a hurricane. Planning ahead gives you more options and better control over situations that could become chaotic at the last moment if you're not ready. To learn more about how to prepare for a hurricane visit [ready.gov/hurricanes](https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes). Find out about preparedness drills or exercises in your area at [ready.gov/prepare](https://www.ready.gov/prepare).

Tips for Planning Ahead

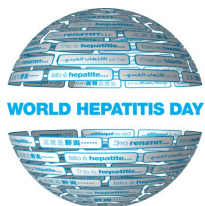
- Watch and share the National Weather Service's video on the [2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook](#)
- Create an [Emergency Communication Plan](#)
- Put together an [Emergency Kit](#) of supplies
- Understand the meaning of [Hurricane and Tropical Storm Watches and Warnings](#)

- **Sign up for local alerts on your phone**, so you can stay aware if the weather gets worse. Download the [FEMA App](#)

COVID-19 Guideline Changes

Attention! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Patients with COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings (Interim Guidance) was updated on July 17, 2020. The most significant change is patients can be released from isolation or quarantine using symptom based strategy using a 24 hour period with NO symptoms.

Click [here](#) to review the summary of changes to the guidance.



Hepatitis Awareness

Worldwide, 290 million people are living with viral hepatitis unaware. Without finding the undiagnosed and linking them to care, millions will continue to suffer, and lives will be lost. On **World Hepatitis Day, July 28, 2020**, healthcare professionals were called on from across the world to take action and raise awareness to find the “missing millions”.

Immunization is the most effective way to prevent transmission of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and the development of acute or chronic hepatitis B. It is well established that patients with end-stage renal disease including dialysis-dependent patients, have an impaired immune response to hepatitis B vaccine. Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for all CKD patients.

Available Resources:

- [World Hepatitis Day](#)
- [Hepatitis Awareness](#)
- [Hep B Vaccine](#)
- [How to Prevent Infection](#)
- [Infection Prevention and You](#)
- [Vaccines and Dialysis](#)

Quality Improvement Initiatives



Reducing Bloodstream Infections: “Back to Basics” Campaign with Hand Hygiene Audits

All facilities should continue to remain vigilant in upholding protocols to reduce the spread of infection. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified hand hygiene as an effective intervention to eliminate infections in dialysis facilities. Conducting practice observations and staff competency testing are considered to be best practices in monitoring infection prevention. This audit tool is intended to promote hand sanitizer utilization. Suggestions for opportunities to share practice observations and audit results should be discussed in your team huddles or staff meetings, and interdisciplinary team meetings. Please use the following resource for this purpose.

- Hand Sanitizer Audit Tool Provider and Patient Resource [Guide](#)
- Dialysis Audit Tool: Hand Hygiene with Sanitizer [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Please visit the IPRO ESRD Program website for additional [Patient Safety](#) materials to help reduce bloodstream infections.



Keeping the Catheter Rate Down by Preserving Current Accesses

Due to the current pandemic, hospitals, access centers, and intervention radiology centers have had a marked decrease in the number of procedures they have been able to complete. This has caused the long-term catheter (LTC) rate across the county to have a notable increase. As these centers begin to reopen and schedule access placement surgeries, there are additional measures that facilities can take to keep the (LTC), rate from increasing.

During a time when getting an appointment for access intervention can take weeks, it is imperative that facilities work to preserve the access that already exists. The best way to ensure access preservation is to educate both staff and patients on the importance of access monitoring.

Nurses should be completing a thorough physical exam prior to every treatment, which includes auscultating the entire arm above the access for any signs of stenosis. Dialysis technicians can be taught to closely monitor arterial and venous pressure to identify trends that may indicate a need for early interventions.

Patients should be provided frequent education on the importance of not applying pressure, and made aware that tight or restrictive clothing or jewelry may damage the access leading to premature failure.

Below are the [ESRD National Coordinating Center \(NCC\)](#) "Lifeline for a Lifetime" patient and provider resources to assist facilities in educating staff and patients.

- [AVG Assessment Algorithm](#)
- [Access Monitoring Presentation](#)
- [Patient Resource](#)



"Let's Start Healthy at Home" Campaign

Resource Toolkit

To promote best outcomes for our patients and assist with modality choices, the IPRO ESRD Network Program is releasing the following resources. The handout is meant to stimulate and initiate conversations about home modality. The companion tri-folds provide further information on each modality choice. Please find Resource packet below:

- Healthy at Home [Guide](#)
- [Do Your Patients Know About Home Treatment Options?](#)
- [Do you know your home treatment options? \(Home Dialysis\)](#)
- [Do you know all of your treatment options? \(Home Hemodialysis\)](#)
- [Do you know all of your treatment options? \(Peritoneal Dialysis\)](#)

Please visit the IPRO ESRD Program website for additional [Modality](#) materials to promote appropriate home dialysis.

Professional Webinar

The IPRO ESRD Network Program is offering a webinar to support the release of our *"Let's Start Healthy at Home" campaign*. This educational webinar will be hosted on Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at 4:15 pm and will feature guest speakers Dr. Michael Kraus and Dr. Brent Miller. Topics for discussion include home growth strategies during the pandemic and beyond, benefits of home dialysis for vulnerable patient populations during the public health crisis, and use of telehealth in the home setting.

- Webinar Registration [Link](#)



Reduce the Wait for a Kidney Transplant

The IPRO ESRD Network Program has developed educational resources to reduce the wait for a kidney transplant. These documents are intended for professionals to highlight topics surrounding living, paired, and deceased donation, the benefits of multi-center listings, and kidneys that are considered less than optimal with a high Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI) score when educating patients about kidney transplant options.

The Network asks that dialysis facility staff become familiar with these concepts, which have been identified as key strategies to increase access to transplant. Please broadly share this educational material with your patient population who are considering transplant or are already on the waitlist. The goal is to educate and discuss these materials so patients can “wait less” for a transplant.

Please create a plan to educate staff and patients about the below resources to educate future transplant candidates.

- [Wait Less - Shorten Your Wait for a Kidney Transplant](#) (for patients)
- [Help Your Patients Reduce the Wait for a Kidney Transplant](#)

National Minority Donor Awareness Month: August 1-31, 2020

National Minority Donor Awareness Month (NMDAM) is a collaborative initiative of [Donate Life America](#) (DLA), [Association for Multicultural Affairs in Transplantation](#) (AMAT), [Association of Organ Procurement Organizations](#) (AOPO), [Health Resources & Services Administration](#) (HRSA), [National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program](#) (MOTTEP) and [National Kidney Foundation](#) (NKF) to save and improve the quality of life of diverse communities by creating a positive culture for organ, eye, and tissue donation.

National Minority Donor Awareness Month stems from National Minority Donor Awareness Week, founded in 1996 to bring heightened awareness to donation and transplantation in multicultural communities – focusing primarily on African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaskan Native communities.

Click [here](#) to download educational materials to share with staff and patients.

Patient Services



Patient Rights and Responsibilities

One of the Network’s responsibilities required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is "evaluating and resolving patient grievances." Through this process, we have recognized that patients are often unaware of their rights as dialysis patients. The Network has developed a new resource to help guide patients navigate through the grievance process with their dialysis clinics. Facility staff are encouraged to share this resource with patients while investigating any grievances at the clinic.

Please click [here](#) to download, print and distribute to patients at your facility.

Grievances and Access to Care

A grievance is defined as a formal or informal written or verbal complaint that is made to any member of the dialysis or transplant center staff by a patient, or the patient's representative, regarding the patient's care or treatment. If the grievant does not feel comfortable filing a grievance with the facility a grievance may be filed directly to the Network. The following is a list of tools and resources to help dialysis facility staff with ensuring patients understand how to file a grievance, including anonymously, and improve their experience of care.

- Dialysis Patient Grievance Toolkit [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Tips for Dialysis Staff to Identify and Manage Retaliation](#)
- [Thriving without Fear-Managing Patient Retaliation](#)

Please visit the IPRO ESRD Program website for additional [Patient Experience of Care](#) materials to help reduce grievances and access to care barriers.



Mental Health Resources for Providers and Patients During COVID-19

Many healthcare providers are facing new challenges while caring for dialysis patients with the prevalence of COVID-19. In addition to ensuring their treatment needs are met, patients and staff are experiencing heightened symptoms related to mental health. The list of resources below are some of you will find on the IPRO Program Website to support the mental health needs of patients and providers.

- [COVID 19 Provider Resources](#)
- [COVID 19 Patient Resources](#)



Virtual Patient and Family Engagement (PFE)

The Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has created a difficult situation for both facility staff and patients. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve the Network supports the utilization of virtual platform alternatives to ensure continuity of care for all ESRD patients. The ESRD Network is here to support your facility while you continue to focus on connecting with patients virtually to promote safety through social distancing.

Virtual engagement can keep a patient connected to their peers and facility staff while also reducing their exposure risk to COVID-19. Virtual patient engagement can be utilized as a promotional measure for patient participation in care planning, QAPI meetings, and support groups.

The Network created a short assessment to capture the various approaches facilities have taken in the adaptation of virtual patient engagement. We are requesting that you fill out this short assessment to give the Network a better sense of the current virtual engagement activities for patients in your facility. This will also allow the Network to ascertain how we can best support those efforts moving forward. **Please complete the assessment by August 15, 2020 via the following assessment link [here](#).**

Dialysis facility staff are encouraged to visit the IPRO ESRD Program website for [patient and family engagement materials](#) to involve patients in QAPI, Care Plan Meetings and Support Groups.

ESRD Educational Virtual Bingo Game

The IPRO ESRD Network Program has developed an ESRD Educational Bingo Game that can be hosted by Peer Mentors (patient leaders) at your facility or dialysis staff



members. The bingo game can be played in-person, however, it has a virtual component that allows patients to play safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bingo game includes 10 different bingo cards, 1 set of instructions for the person hosting the game, 1 key sheet document and 1 powerpoint document that facilitates the virtual component of the game. This is a fun and interactive way to teach patients about their regular care as kidney patients such as infection prevention, vascular accesses, treatment options, diabetes, vaccinations, patient engagement activities, among many others!

Please download, print, and review the bingo game materials provided below to start playing with your patients. Consider teaching staff and patient ambassadors/mentors on how to host the game. Have fun!

- [Bingo Game Instructions](#)
- Bingo Cards: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#)
- [Bingo Key Sheet](#)
- [Bingo Powerpoint](#) (virtual option)

Data Systems and Reporting



Technical Assistance

The IPRO ESRD Data Department provides technical assistance using a customer support system. This is one place for your data submission needs for various systems such as CROWNWeb, NHSN, Dialysis data or Quality Incentive program. In order to meet the needs of our facilities, the new system will provide support:

- **Email:** To reach the Network Data Support Team by email, send requests for assistance to NW1Help@iproesrdnetwork.freshdesk.com. The help can be a return email providing information about the data submission from our knowledge base or a phone call from the staff.
- **Support Portal:** By registering for the IPRO ESRD Network Support Portal, you will be able to quickly and easily submit questions and requests for assistance directly to the Network Data Support staff. You can register for the portal by going to <http://help.esrd.ipro.org> and selecting "Sign Up".
- **Knowledge Base:** The Network Data Team has documented answers to a multitude of "Frequently Asked Questions" and have posted them to the Knowledge Base on the Support Portal. You can browse the different knowledge items, and if you still need help, you can register for the portal and submit a ticket for help. The Knowledge Base can also be located at <http://help.esrd.ipro.org>.

NOTE: When submitting a request to the Network, you should **NEVER** include any patient-specific information such as Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Medicare Claim Number, etc. The only patient identifier that can safely be communicated is the Unique Patient Identifier (UPI) from CROWNWeb.

For more information, please visit the Network [website](#).

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IPRO End-Stage Renal Disease Network of New England, the ESRD Organization for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, prepared this material under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. CMS Contract Number: HHSM-500-2016-00019C.