

Emergency Transportation Options for Dialysis Patients

Best Practices for Serving a High-Risk Patient Population



Is there an emergency plan in place in your area?

Provision of safe, reliable transportation to and from dialysis facilities for individuals needing life-sustaining dialysis treatments is critical, and more of a challenge than usual during emergency situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

As transport companies and ridesharing companies interrupt services due to COVID-19, state emergency management agencies (EMAs), transportation services, and community organizations have been devising back-up plans that include alternative transportation options for dialysis patients.

Because of the changing nature of transportation during an emergency, it is important to think creatively when setting up alternative ride systems. The best approach is to have a backup plan in place before a transportation company in your area is unable to manage services. The options below are examples of ways communities have come together to continue to offer transportation services. Please pass this resource on to transportation providers so they can start to think about how they can work with you to develop plans for emergency situations.

Transportation Best Practices: "Think Outside the Box."

Here are some best practices implemented by EMAs and government agencies across the country to support continued safe transport:

- Private and public transportation providers are given protocols that require disinfection of vehicles between rides and sanitizing of vehicles (using foggers) daily to support continued safe transport.
- Healthcare facilities have also provided PPE to transport companies that otherwise had no access to these supplies, with a goal to ensure safe transport continues to be provided.
- Transportation companies utilize caution tape to mark off and maintain safe distances between patients, and between patients and drivers; some companies offer only one-on-one rides rather than rideshare.
- State Medicaid departments, and in some states, county EMAs are working with public transport to provide free rides to dialysis treatments for patients who experience transportation loss through their normal provider.
- Public vehicles that have capacity for medical transport are scheduled more exclusively for transport of dialysis patients.
- Private ride services are re-purposing their vehicles to offer dialysis patient transport. They are incorporating plastic seat coverings and partitions between the passengers and driver's cab areas.
- Counties have established a "community cares" task force that includes local officials, community leaders and representatives of community organizations who coordinate with local faith-based organizations to provide volunteers to take dialysis patients to appointments when no other mode of transport is available.
- Cities are partnering with local senior centers to expand transportation to dialysis patients through senior center vans when no other mode of transportation can be secured.

Check with your state's Department of Medicaid, local EMAs, senior centers, department of job and family services, and public transportation providers to inquire about what emergency transportation options may be available in your area.

For more information and resources visit the Network's website below.



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