



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](http://network1.esrd.ipro.org)

# Provider Insider

AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER FOR RENAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

December 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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## Season's Greetings!

The I PRO ESRD Network staff members want to take this opportunity to say, "thank you" for the tireless efforts of ESRD healthcare professionals. We applaud your commitment and dedication in providing quality of care to the patients you serve. As our partners in the renal community, your collaboration and hard work helps to ensure the realization of our goals for improved quality and safety for all ESRD patients in the Network service area.

Wishing you a season of joy and looking forward to continued success in 2021. Happy Holidays!

## COVID-19 Resources for Patients and Professionals

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



## Alerts and Recalls

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

## Upcoming Events

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

Announcements & Updates

[Holiday Guidance](#)



As we thank and wish you all the best this holiday season we also wish to share some important tools to help you and your patients to stay safe. This season more than ever planning holiday gatherings is important. We recognize that many of the patients and staff are becoming fatigued with the cautions necessary to prevent the spread of flu and COVID. We are sharing these resources to review and share with patients, caregivers and staff to promote a SAFE and healthy holiday season. This season more than ever planning holiday gatherings is important. We recognize that many of the patients and staff are becoming fatigued with the cautions necessary to prevent the spread of flu and COVID. We are sharing these resources to review and share with patients, caregivers and staff to promote a SAFE and healthy holiday.

**ACTION ITEM:** Please share the following resources with dialysis staff and patients.

- [Safer Gatherings](#): Guidelines for hosting holiday events and how to say no to attendance at gatherings
- [How to Wear a Non-Medical Fabric Mask Safety](#)



## COVID-19 Best Practices for Working with Patients Who Reside in a Nursing Home/ Home or Skilled Nursing Facility

The IPRO ESRD Network of the South Atlantic recognizes the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted in patient coordination and care. Especially of those dialysis patients residing in a Nursing Home (NH) or Long Term Care (LTC) facility. All parties involved in the coordination of these patients play a key role in their health, and you as dialysis providers have a big impact in their care.

Please watch this 8 minute [video](#) to learn about key information and best practices for dialysis providers who have patients living in a NH/LTC, such as:

- Nursing Home cohorting practices
- CMS COVID-19 Toolkit - Nursing Home Best Practices
- Data Transparency, where to find it?
- Home Dialysis at Nursing Home Facilities
- Call Ahead Culture
- [Dialysis/Nursing Home Exchange Form](#)



## How to Cope with Screening Fatigue

Are your patients experiencing COVID-19 screening fatigue? There are new tools available to help you keep patients engaged in their care for COVID-19.

Developed by ESRD Networks 7, 15, 16, 17 and 18, the professional resource [Tips to Overcoming COVID-19 Screening Fatigue](#) was created to help you engage patients through the COVID-19 screening process. The patient resource, [What is COVID-19 Screening Fatigue?](#) explains what screening fatigue is in simple terms.

Both resources:

- Provide tips for helping patients overcome COVID-19 screening fatigue.
- Help identify patients' potential exposure to COVID-19.
- Discuss how to improve responses and engagement with COVID-19 screenings.

Please download and share these resources with dialysis facilities in your service area. For additional COVID-19 resources, visit [www.kidneycovidinfocenter.com](http://www.kidneycovidinfocenter.com).

The holiday season can be stressful when managing chronic kidney disease, and even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. This webinar will explore how stress can affect our well-being along with coping tips for taking care of ourselves.

The [Dialysis Patient Citizens Education Center](#) is offering an upcoming webinar and invite you to share this information with your patients, and their families.

- Webinar: [Coping During the Holidays in the Pandemic](#)
- Presented by: Kathy Aebel-Groesch, MSW, LCSW
- Date: January 17, 2021 at 2 PM
- Registration: <https://www.dpcedcenter.org/news-events/education-webinars/signup/>

Print out the flyer: [color](#) / [black and white](#)

Another important resource for patients brought to you by Dialysis Patient Citizens is the Dialysis Plan Choice ([www.DialysisPlanChoice.org](http://www.DialysisPlanChoice.org)) Medicare Advantage plan comparison tool we created, which permits patients to view MA plan options that include their current dialysis clinic and nephrologist, and compare their likely out-of-pocket costs.

## Quality Improvement Initiatives



### 12/16/20 Webinar on Living Donation: Giving the Gift of Life

Living donation presents an additional opportunity for transplant candidates by saving two lives: the recipient and the next patient on the deceased organ waiting list. During the holiday season the IPRO ESRD Network Program would like to highlight living donation as an option for transplant with a webinar on December 16, 2020 from 3-4 pm titled "Giving the Gift of Life". With presentations by Dr. Caroline Rochon, Surgical Director with Hartford Hospital as well as a guest speaker from the National Living Donor Assistance center.

This webinar is intended for dialysis providers, transplant centers providers, and patients. Please use the link below to register.

[Register Here](#)

Please find professional and patient resources that can help support your education about living donation for your patients:

- [Wait Less - Shorten Your Wait for a Kidney Transplant Handout](#) (for patients)
- [Help Your Patients Reduce the Wait for a Kidney Transplant Handout](#)
- [The Big Ask, The Big Give?](#)
- [Living Donors Online](#)
- [National Living Donor Assistance Center](#)



### Catheter Only New Patient Admissions: A Good Place to Start to Reduce your Long Term Catheter (LTC) Rate

In June, the Network released the *Incident Access Report Summary* to facilities to share data on the accesses your patients are admitted with. It was at this time that the Network collaborated with facilities and area hospitals providing access interventions during the height of the pandemic to understand barriers preventing the removal of catheters.

Unfortunately, LTC rates in the Network have continued to rise significantly. The Network has just released the November version of this report showing August CROWNWeb data. For this reporting period we identified facilities who have had a

greater than a 20% increase in LTC only admissions or are currently admitting 100% of patients with LTC only. We provided some strategies to consider in working to lower those incoming rates of LTC only admissions and hope that you will reach out to your Network to create a plan aimed at correcting this issue. Data has shown that decreases in the amount of incoming LTC only admissions helps to ensure lower overall LTC rates for a facility consistently. If you have not received this report by December 14, 2020 please contact your local Network.



## The Benefits of Offering Home Dialysis in the Skilled Nursing Facility or Nursing Home

In an effort to support the goal of improving kidney health, the IPRO ESRD Network Program recognizes that the transition of care for a patient between their skilled nursing facility (SNF) or long term care setting to an incenter dialysis facility is associated with increased safety risks. Dialyzing patients in their SNF or nursing home will not only keep staff and patients safer but can also help improve other outcomes. The Network is striving to increase opportunities where patients can receive their renal replacement therapy in their SNF or nursing home. We ask that you investigate those options in your region and refer patients appropriately. In the coming months the Network will be sharing education and resources focused on ways you can increase the availability of this option for patients in your area. Please consider these important factors when you place your patients as well as if this is an opportunity for you to start your own program within some local area SNF or nursing home providers.

Benefits of home therapy provided in the SNF/Nursing home setting include:

- Home modalities providing a gentler removal of volume and wastes that is safer for a more fragile patient
- Injury & discomfort during transport due to inclement weather etc.
- Decreased exposure of a communicable disease (flu, COVID, colds, viruses)
- Patients being able to receive the enhanced benefits of home dialysis - More frequent dialysis, improved mortality and morbidity associated with home therapies.
- Disruption to patient schedule (ancillary therapies, medications, meals)
- Potential break down of coordination of care
- Expensive transportation costs

**ACTION ITEMS:** The IPRO ESRD Network Program would like you to consider these factors and discuss with your leadership the potential for creating home modality programs and determining which patients in your facilities would benefit the most from this treatment option.

## Patient Services



## Access to Care

In 2016, the IPRO ESRD Network introduced an innovative program to help facilities accept patients who had been previously involuntarily discharged from their dialysis facility. Access to patient appropriate dialysis care is a growing concern throughout the dialysis community, especially during this unprecedented time. Patients are denied placement in an outpatient dialysis unit due to a history of inappropriate behavior resulting in an Involuntary Discharge (IVD). The Second Chance program helps those patients who have been involuntarily discharged from their unit to receive a second chance and a placement at an outpatient facility. Through this second chance, the patient and facility get to know one another and the patient has an opportunity to gain a sense of stability and reliable access to the treatments needed to stay healthy and to survive. Please review the Second Chance program that is supported by the Network.

- [Second Chance Facility Brochure](#)
- [Second Chance Facility Flyer](#)



## Technology Helps Caregivers Stay Safe and Adhere to Plan of Care

Family caregiving can be a full-time job: They manage doctor's appointments, provide transportation, make sure medications are taken on time, and keep the home going. Here are some handy technology resources you can share with caregivers that are designed to make their lives easier as they help loved ones stay safe and healthy as they adhere to their plan of care.

[How Are You Feeling Today](#), a new interactive online tool to help caregivers understand they are not alone and that others are feeling the same way.

[Prepare](#), is a free step by step program that helps your family make a plan for medical decisions.

Medication management is a complex task—especially as most caregivers have little to no medical training and are already balancing a multitude of other complex tasks, like scheduling doctor's appointments or planning for long term care. Here is a [website](#) with a multitude of online tools to help caregivers manage their loved ones medications safely.



## Get to Know Your Mentee!

Peer mentoring represents a unique experience where mentees have the ability to identify with a mentor with similar experiences. This identification is associated with building a strong rapport or mentor-mentee relationship. Utilizing elaboration techniques can help patients successfully explain their experiences and help mentors engage in levels of reflective listening. Elaboration skills guide mentees in moving their generalized discussion points or grievances to specific issues. Moreover, elaboration skills incorporate open-ended questions. These questions encourage longer, more detailed answers, that further explains the mentee's experiences or grievances. These questions typic begin with what, why, how or could. These questions implore critical thinking and can help encourage a consistent conversational flow.

Resources:

- [Open Ended Questions](#)
- [Work Phase Skills](#)

## Data Systems and Reporting



### Alerts in the New EQRS System

Please refrain from submitting 2746 forms in CROWNWeb. Currently, there are known issues with the 2746 form submitting properly in EQRS; and the Quality Net Helpdesk is working to resolve these issues as soon as possible. The Network will continue to provide communication as we receive notification of a resolution.

Please click [here](#) for more information on alerts in EQRS system

### Information Systems 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](mailto: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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