



Changing Patient Chair Times: Best Practices



Network staff frequently receive grievances from patients who are unhappy about changes in their dialysis seating — specifically changes in chair time, being put on late, or switching pods. For many patients these changes cause anxiety and require a big adjustment.

Patients should be notified, both verbally and in writing, about any changes in their dialysis schedule as soon as possible. Providing a minimum of two weeks' notice is a best practice for creating a culture of transparency and building trust between patients and providers.

With any adjustment or modification of chair times for patients, it is also important to consider the psychosocial stressors that can affect a patient dealing with these changes. Stressors can include concerns about the impact of the change on transportation, employment status, access to healthy food, and more.

Tips

- Provide the patients with a letter explaining the upcoming changes in treatment time and keep a signed copy.
- Address and accommodate patients' new transportation needs and inform transportation companies of changes.
- Explain rationale for changes to the patients to gain their understanding and trust.
- Remind the patients that they can put themselves on a waiting list for a different chair time.
- Discuss with the patients any anxiety related to chair time changes to ease their stress and improve patient satisfaction.
- Make sure that patients understand the changes are not punitive.
- Be flexible with patients' pre-existing appointments.
- Communicate changes with nursing home staff and care partners as needed.

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