



February 2009



Nutshell Update – Community Information Resource (CIR)

It is that time of year when the Network ties up a few loose ends and makes sure to communicate a few important points! Please share Network Information with your Patients.

Contacting Heartland Kidney Network

- The Network made available, at a minimum, the following new or revised information to the facilities in its Network area with a directive to make the information available to patients or inform patients on how to contact the Network to obtain the information:

Network Facility Poster

- The Network provides each facility in IA, KS, MO & NE with a poster for their waiting area that describes the role of the Network in handling complaints and grievances. The poster also provides the patient toll free number (1-8200-444-9965). If your facility needs another poster contact the Network.

Resolution of Complaints and Grievances

- Sometimes conflicts arise at the dialysis facility requiring Network involvement and possible investigation. In addition to providing conflict resolution training, the Network will provide mediation, referral, and grievance investigation services upon request. The Network maintains a user friendly, toll-free number available to patients within Network area.

New ESRD Patient Orientation Package (NEPOP)

- Each new chronic dialysis patient receives an introduction letter from the Network in the NEPOP within 3 months of initiation of dialysis in a chronic facility. The letter contains information on the Network's grievance procedure, the Network's toll-free number, services and assistance offered, available Network educational resources, and contact information / function of the State Survey Agency. The Heartland Kidney Network Booklet was revised and made available to new patients on October, 2008. The NEPOP letter was updated on 02/2009 and will be updated annually.

Patient Newsletter

- Heartland Kidney Network has developed and distributed patient newsletters on a quarterly basis since 2001. Contents of the newsletter include articles on the role of the ESRD Network, the grievance process, treatment options and new ESRD technologies, information that addresses rehabilitation and quality of life, vascular access, the Network's toll-free number, the Network's website and Dialysis Facility Compare.
- Heartland Kidney Network takes great effort in obtaining the most current and relevant patient educational materials. When the facility receives educational materials such as newsletters, booklets, brochures from the Network, please make sure these resources are distributed and or available to all patients at all times.

Collaboration with Strategic Partners

- In order to utilize Network staffing and financial resources judiciously, Heartland Kidney Network draws upon (where possible) existing resources in the community and/or collaborative efforts (such as National Kidney Foundation, American Association of Kidney Patients, Medical Education Institute, other ESRD Networks).

State Survey Agencies

- The Network and the State agencies work together to oversee quality patient care. The Network receives copies of dialysis facility survey and certification forms following a site visit. The Network is available to offer technical assistance and educational resources to facilities following a state agency visit.

Vocational Rehabilitation Information

- Vocational rehabilitation (VR) can be defined as the process of facilitating an individual in the choice of, or return to, a suitable vocation. When necessary, assisting the patient to obtain training for such a vocation. Vocational rehabilitation can also mean preparing an individual regardless of age, or physical condition to cope emotionally, psychologically, and physically with changing circumstances in life, including remaining at school, work, or a work equivalent (homemaker). Even being able to do pleasurable activities would be considered renal rehabilitation. Creatively work with your patients to help them obtain their highest level of activity.

Vascular Access

- Permanent vascular access has been a hot topic for several years. Every ESRD patient should be evaluated for arteriovenous fistula candidacy. The use of catheters as a vascular access is to be avoided. Arteriovenous grafts require monitoring to detect early stenosis. When a graft fails consider the creation of a secondary arteriovenous fistula. Please visit fistulafirst.org for more information on this topic. The Heartland Kidney Network website www.heartlandkidney.org also contains a variety of educational resources on vascular access. A new addition to the website is the monthly vascular access data collection sheet used by the non-LDO facilities.

Kidney transplantation

- Every patient has the right to be evaluated for kidney transplant. Please provide your patient with information on transplantation. The Heartland Kidney Network has resource materials on transplantation.

Home therapies

- New renal care therapies are available. Patients have a right to be informed of the advantages/disadvantages of all forms of dialysis (hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, home dialysis) and renal (kidney) transplantation.

In-center self-care

- Some dialysis centers are beginning to start "self care pods" in their units. Self care varies from unit to unit but usually consists of patients self-cannulation, machine set up and limited self monitoring. If your facility is interested in starting an in-center self care program, the Heartland Kidney Network has information on this topic.

Immunization

- The center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that all ESRD patients receive influenza, pneumonia and Hepatitis B vaccines. This is due to the immuno-compromised condition of renal patients. Receipt of these vaccines should be documented in the patients' health records.

Healthy People 2010

- Healthy People 2010 is a set of health objectives for the Nation to achieve over the first decade of the new century. Some of the objectives of this project include reducing new cases of ESRD, reducing deaths from cardiovascular disease, increasing the use arteriovenous fistulas, increase the proportion of dialysis patients registered on the waiting list for transplantation, reduce kidney failure due to diabetes, encourage pre-ESRD evaluations and increase the proportion of ESRD patients who receive a transplant within 3 years of registration on the waiting list.

Preventive Medical Care

Health promotion encompasses but is not limited to modifying personal health behaviors to reduce the risk of disease and injury. Some of the most frequently addressed issues of health promotion include:

- Weight control, fecal occult blood testing, mammography, pelvic exam, Pap smear, tuberculin skin testing, alcohol and drug avoidance breast self-examination, exercise, seat belt use and tobacco avoidance.