

# Collaboration With the End-Stage Renal Disease Networks

This document provides a brief overview of the ESRD Networks. We recommended it be reviewed with staff members as a huddle topic to increase their knowledge of the ESRD Networks role in improving the care of patients.

## Overview of the ESRD Network Program

- There are 18 ESRD Networks nationwide and an ESRD National Coordinating Center (ESRD NCC).
- The ESRD Networks work under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and serve as a liaison between CMS and providers of ESRD services (dialysis centers and transplant programs).
- The mission of the ESRD Network Program is to promote optimal dialysis and transplant care and improve the quality of life for people with kidney disease.

## The Network in Action

The ESRD Networks partner with dialysis facilities, transplant centers, patients and families, and other stakeholders to improve the quality of care for people on dialysis and individuals with a kidney transplant.

For example, the Networks develop community coalitions and partner with patient organizations to create and distribute educational resources to assist patients, including those with social determinants of health needs.

Facilities participate in data-driven quality improvement projects to promote collaboration, identification of best and promising practices, and improvement in patient outcomes (e.g., transplant waitlisting, depression screening and treatment).

For example, high performing facilities, may be asked to participate in Expert Team calls to share their best practices on topics such as hospital utilization, vaccinations, and health equity.

The ESRD Networks conduct multiple activities to drive improvement in the care of individuals with ESRD, including:

- Assisting with challenging patient situations, including grievances and involuntary discharges (IVDs).
- Providing technical assistance (e.g., 1:1 strategy sessions, root cause analysis) and educational materials programs to improve facility quality metrics. This includes sharing best practices and proven tools (e.g., Change Package to Increase Home Dialysis Use).
- Engaging patients as Patient Subject Matter Experts to participate in various CMS activities and develop and distribute educational materials.
- Supporting facility data entry to the End Stage Renal Disease Quality Review System (EQRS).
- Collaborating with stakeholders to meet quality improvement goals.

## KCER Program

The Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) provides technical assistance to ESRD Networks, dialysis facilities, transplant centers, kidney organizations and other key stakeholders to ensure timely and efficient disaster preparedness, response, and recovery for the kidney community.

[www.kcercoalition.com](http://www.kcercoalition.com)

## Team Huddle Discussion

- Are you familiar with your ESRD Network and who you should contact for support?  
[esrd.qsource.org](http://esrd.qsource.org)
- How can you collaborate with your ESRD Network to improve patient outcomes?

**Your Network team is here to help you.  
Get to know your Network today.**

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