



Facility Process for Anonymous Patient Complaints and Grievances

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has a heightened focus on patient centered care and patient engagement; this is especially true for the grievance process. Patients have the right to file complaints and grievances with their dialysis facility and remain anonymous. Effectively identifying and addressing grievances promote positive patient experiences and may impact patient satisfaction scores. CMS expects each facility to have a process in place to address these complaints. All patients should be able to express their concerns or grievances without fear of retaliation or reprisal. Some patients may only feel comfortable discussing their concerns if they can remain anonymous.

The following are recommendations to promote a robust, anonymous grievance process:

- Develop an internal process that will capture all complaints and grievances, including those that are anonymous. (i.e. you may want to have a suggestions/comments box in your lobby; place a grievance form that can be taken home and completed, then returned to the box in the lobby; or discuss utilizing your Facility Patient Representative (FPR) to address small problems before they escalate).
- Educate patients on the facility's policy and procedure to file an anonymous grievance.
- Discuss anonymous grievances in your monthly QAPI and governing body meetings.
- Utilize the grievance preparation worksheets included in the Dialysis Patient Grievance Toolkit, or develop your own. The form should include, at a minimum: the date of the incident, staff involved, description of the incident, witnesses, and process for which the grievance can be submitted to maintain anonymity.
- Educate all staff on the importance of actively listening to their patient's concerns and how to encourage patients to report their concerns, including any options for remaining anonymous.
- Display posters or flyers for patients with the process and resources.