

Who is Network 8?

We are the agency under contract with Medicare that works to improve the health and well-being of people with kidney failure.

What the Network Does

- Helps patients learn about kidney failure and treatment options
- Helps dialysis facilities reduce infections and improve quality of care
- Helps patients find back-up facilities during disasters
- Helps patients who have grievances or concerns

How We Involve Patients

Patients serve on boards and other committees. Locally, patients may serve as Patient Representatives. Patients identify education needs for staff and patients and help develop projects for dialysis facilities to improve patient care.

How We Can Help with a Grievance

A grievance is a written or spoken complaint about the care or services provided from a dialysis facility. The complaint may be made to a facility staff member, the Network, or the State Survey Agency without fear of the staff becoming upset or denying you services. The complaint may be anonymous (not providing your name to the Network) or confidential (providing your name to the Network, but not the facility).

All facilities have a grievance policy, and if you have a problem at your facility, that was not solved by talking with the staff, or if you are not comfortable talking to the staff, you can call the Network.

There is helpful grievance toolkit developed by patients to guide you through the grievance process. It is available on the National Forum of ESRD Networks website in English and Spanish: <http://esrdnetworks.org/resources/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-english>

To file a grievance, please contact the Network:

Phone: 1-877-936-9260

Email: info@nw8.esrd.net

Address: 775 Woodlands Pkwy, Suite 310, Ridgeland, MS 39157

Visit our website: quality.allianthealth.org/topic/esrd-nw8/.

Network 8 and the Dialysis Facility

Who Is Network 8?

Network 8 is contracted through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide technical assistance to ESRD providers and patients in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Under CMS direction, we will conduct the following quality improvement projects in 2018.

- Decrease bloodstream infections
- Increase the number of dialysis patients on the kidney transplant waitlist
- Increase the number of home dialysis patients
- Population health focused pilot project to be determined

Additionally, the Network receives and investigates patient grievances. CMS defines a grievance as a written or spoken complaint regarding the care or services provided from a Medicare-certified dialysis facility. A grievance may be made by a patient and/or another party, to a facility staff member, the Network, or the State Survey Agency. Grievances may be made anonymously (not providing a name to the Network) or confidentially (providing a name to the Network, but not the facility). The overarching goal is to improve the quality of care and outcomes on a national level.

What Do We Do?

The Network is a resource available to dialysis staff and patients. In addition to quality improvement projects, the Network does the following:

- Promotes patient engagement and patient-centered care
- Assists patients and providers with grievances and complaints
- Collaborates with community stakeholders (i.e. dialysis organizations, hospitals, state agencies, transplant facilities, etc.)
- Conducts on-site reviews, if appropriate
- Consults with staff to decrease involuntary discharges and address issues related to patients who are at-risk
- Disseminates information from CMS to providers
- Encourages patient participation in activities at the local and national level
- Encourages patient-centered care and improved communication between patients and dialysis providers
- Maintains data in CROWNWeb and the Quality Incentive Program (QIP)
- Provides outreach and education
- Provides technical assistance to providers to ensure collaboration and cooperation in meeting Network goals
- Recommends sanctions for facilities who engage in inappropriate practice patterns that are incongruent with those of the Network