

Q4 Network NOTES

Quality Insights Renal Network 4 Patient Newsletter

In This Issue

- What Vaccinations Do You Need?
- RSN Annual Essay Contest Deadline is August 1
- Registration Now Open for AAKP National Patient Meeting
- ESRD Patient Story: Jack
- ESRD Support Groups
- FDA Alerts and Recalls
- Staying Healthy: Medicare's Preventive Services
- Pet Therapy Interview Series
- Teen Invents \$500 Home Dialysis Machine
- Common Concerns about Permanent Access
- Quotable Quotes & A Few Jokes
- Is Home Hemodialysis (HD) Right for You?

What Vaccinations Do You Need?

Vaccinations not only protect you from diseases, they protect others around you. Medicare covers flu, pneumococcal, and Hepatitis B shots. Flu, pneumococcal infections and Hepatitis B can be life threatening. These shots are especially important for those who have chronic illness, including heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all patients with Chronic Kidney Disease receive Hepatitis B, pneumococcal and influenza (flu) shots.



How often are these shots covered?

- Flu shots
 - Once each flu season in the fall or winter
 - You need a flu shot for the current virus each year
- Pneumococcal shots
 - These shots help prevent pneumococcal infections (like certain types of pneumonia)
 - A different, second shot, is covered 11 months after you get the first shot
 - Ask your health care provider about the timing and spacing of these shots
- Hepatitis B shots
 - This series of 3 shots helps protect people from getting Hepatitis B
 - Medicare covers these shots for people at high or medium risk for Hepatitis B

RSN Annual Essay Contest Deadline is August 1

The Renal Support Network's (RSN) annual essay contest will be on the topic, "What do you know now about Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) that you wish you'd known when you were diagnosed?" A total of \$900 in prizes will be awarded. Essayists must have been diagnosed with CKD. **The deadline for submitting essays is August 1.** For details, see <http://www.rsnhope.org/essay-contest/contest-rules/>.



610 Freedom Business
Center, Suite 102
King of Prussia, PA 19406
(610) 265-2418

(800) 548-9205
(Patients Only)

www.qirn4.org

Follow

"ESRDNetwork4" on:



This material was prepared by Quality Insights Renal Network 4 under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The contents do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.
Publication No. ESRD4-061416



Registration Now Open for AAKP National Patient Meeting

Registration is now open for the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) National Patient Meeting, to be held September 23-25 in Nashville, TN. Three major themes at this year's Convention will be:

- Increasing Living Organ Donation (including a workshop on "Having Your Donor Find You" on September 22)
- Engaging Patients: How Voices and Choices Shape Your Future
- Food, Drugs and Safety

Eight continuing education credits are available for social workers, dietitians, and registered nurses. **Scholarships, covering only the conference fees, are available to patients, but you must apply before July 31.** For more information, the conference brochure, registration, and a scholarship application, see <http://bit.ly/1UxAQlz>.

ESRD Patient Story: Jack

Jack Thomas from Mars, PA was featured in the *Your Life, Your Choice: Stories from Kidney Transplant Patients and Donors*, developed by the ESRD National Coordinating Center. Read Jack's inspiring story here: <http://bit.ly/1UvxsL9>.

ESRD Support Groups

ESRD Support Group for Spouses

Due to an expressed interest, a support group for spouses and significant others of ESRD patients is being formed. The location for this group will be in the Lancaster/Ephrata area of Pennsylvania. If you are interested in joining this spousal support group **OR** would like to form a different support group, let us know at the Network office by calling (800) 548-9205.

AAKP Patient Support Groups

Visit the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) national listing of patient support groups: <https://www.aakp.org/community/support-groups.html>.

Filing Grievances

To file a grievance, please contact QIRN4 by using the following contact information.

Quality Insights Renal Network 4
610 Freedom Business Center, Suite 102
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Patient Toll-Free Number: (800) 548-9205
www.qirn4.org



FDA Alerts and Recalls

Over-the-Counter Antacid Products Containing Aspirin: FDA Drug Safety Communication - Serious Bleeding Risk:

<http://1.usa.gov/1XnB0Sr>

Loperamide (Imodium): Drug Safety

Communication - Serious Heart Problems with High Doses from Abuse and Misuse:

<http://1.usa.gov/1OnDnSF>

Stay Informed.

Visit the Pennsylvania Health Department's Health Alerts, Advisories and Updates website at: <http://bit.ly/1sEBes1>.

Do you have ideas for this newsletter? We want your feedback!

Do you find this newsletter helpful? Are there things you'd like to see changed? Please leave us feedback by taking this short survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QCMBN87>. Please

submit items of interest for the QIRN4 Patient

Newsletter to Deborah Knight at

dknight@nw4.esrd.net.



Staying Healthy: Medicare’s Preventive Services

The best way to stay healthy is to live a healthy lifestyle. You can be healthier and prevent disease by exercising, eating well, keeping a healthy weight and not smoking. Medicare can help. Medicare pays for many preventive services to keep you healthy. Preventive services can find health problems early, when treatment works best, and can keep you from getting certain diseases. Preventive services include exams, shots, lab tests and screenings. They also include counseling and education to help you take care of your own health.



Medicare covers a review of your health and education and counseling about preventive services in the first 12 months of Medicare B coverage. If you have had Part B for longer than 12 months, you are eligible for a yearly wellness visit to develop or update a personalized prevention plan based on your current health and risk factors. Medicare covers this visit once every 12 months.

| Medicare Covered Preventive Services | |
|---|--|
| Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening | Hepatitis B shot |
| Alcohol misuse screening & counseling | Hepatitis C screening |
| Bone mass measurement | Mammogram |
| Cardiovascular disease screening | Medical nutrition therapy services |
| Colorectal cancer screenings | Obesity screening and counseling |
| Depression screening | Sexually transmitted infections screening & counseling |
| Diabetes screening & self-management training | Tobacco use cessation |
| Flu shot | “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit |
| Glaucoma test | Yearly “Wellness” visit |

Register at **MyMedicare.gov** to get direct access to preventive health information 24 hours a day, every day. You can **track your preventive services**, get a **2-year calendar of the Medicare-covered tests and screenings** you are eligible for, and **print a personalized “on-the-go” report** to take to your next doctor’s appointment.





Pet Therapy Interview

Rachel Peck, ARA Dialysis Center of North Philadelphia*

Many people who are on dialysis experience depression and/or anxiety. Research suggests that there are many benefits that come from being around a pet during this time.

We recently talked to Rachel Peck, a social worker at the American Renal Associates (ARA) Dialysis Center of North Philadelphia, part-time mental health counselor, and Vice Chair of the Council of Nephrology Social Workers (CNSW) of Eastern PA and DE. Rachel is a pet therapy advocate.



Working at the ARA Dialysis Center of North Philadelphia, Rachel has seen how stressful dialysis and kidney disease can be for her patients, which sparked her renewed interest in pet therapy. She has experienced firsthand how the stress and worry melts away when a person engages in pet therapy.

“When a patient is around a pet, endorphins are released and tension often dissipates,” Rachel said.

Pet therapy is known to provide comfort and emotional support for patients and is also beneficial to families, visitors and staff. Although her facility does not currently have a pet therapy program, Rachel has explored options for dialysis patients within the Network 4 area. She has since located several dialysis facilities and countless hospitals that have pet therapy programs.

“Some dialysis facilities are beginning to offer pet therapy either at a patient’s chair side or in the lobby of the facility,” Rachel continued.

Rachel completed her Bachelors in Psychology at the Pennsylvania State University and her Masters in Social Work at The University of Pittsburgh. She completed her field placement at the Department of Veteran Affairs in the Home-Based Primary Care Department. Rachel worked as a renal social worker for three years in Pittsburgh until relocating to the Philadelphia area.

To learn more about pet therapy, Rachel recommends checking out the PAWS for People website at: <http://www.pawsforpeople.org/who-we-are/benefits-of-pet-therapy/>. She also suggests checking out the PennState Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center’s pet therapy program, which is explained at <http://bit.ly/1YptW74>.

**This is the first in a series of three interviews with dialysis providers who are pet therapy advocates.*

Teen Invents \$500 Home Dialysis Machine

Seventeen-year-old Anya Pogharian’s high school science project could end up changing the way dialysis care is delivered. After poring over online dialysis machine owner’s manuals, she developed a new prototype using simple technology. While machines currently cost about \$30,000, hers would cost just \$500 — making it more affordable for people to buy and have at home. Read more about her accomplishment: <http://bit.ly/1OnFrKz>.



Common Concerns about Permanent Access: How will my fistula or graft look after surgery?*

It's normal to have concerns about your access, and it's important to talk about those concerns, especially with your kidney care team. Some people may be concerned about how their fistula or graft will look after surgery. Worries may include:

- "People might ask me what it is."
- "I might feel embarrassed by how it looks."
- "I could have scars or my veins may bulge."
- "I might feel sad when I look at it."

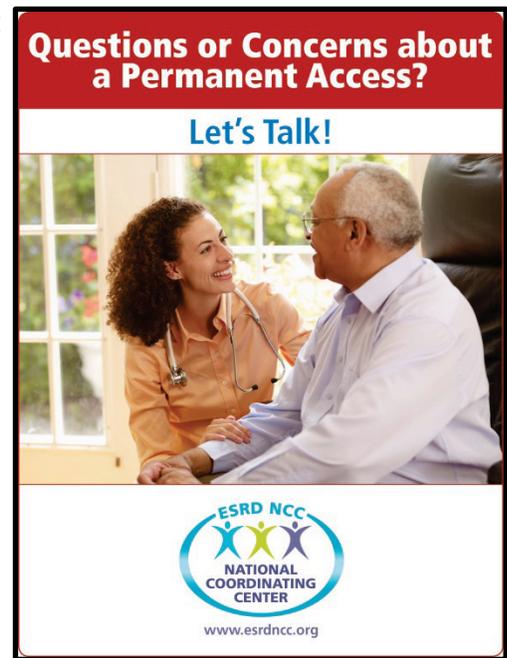
Getting used to something different on your body is hard. Your healthcare team can help answer your questions and, if you like, can put you in touch with patients who can talk about their experiences. Talking with someone who has gone through the same thing can help you figure out how to cope with this change.

Here are some ideas on how to manage changes you are experiencing:

- Ask your surgeon what the access will look like.
- Talk with your social worker about ways to cope with how you are feeling.
- Consider your access a "badge of honor" or "lifeline."
- Remind yourself that dialysis is life-saving, and you can live longer with a permanent access.
- Remind yourself that the change in appearance is necessary but does not change who you are.
- Consider clothing that will provide cover like flowing sleeves.
- Talking with your kidney care team is important. They can also put you in touch with someone else who has a fistula or a graft.

When people ask you questions about your access, be open to sharing your story. Tell them how your vascular access helps you better manage your kidney disease.

*Information provided as part of the ESRD NCC publication, *Questions or Concerns about a Permanent Access? Let's Talk!* <http://bit.ly/1OqMp1q>.



Quotable Quotes & A Few Jokes: Submitted by Allen Nelson



- "A happy family is but an earlier heaven." – George Bernard Shaw
- "One man with courage makes a majority." – Andrew Jackson
- "Families are like fudge - mostly sweet with a few nuts." – Les Dawson
- "A warm smile is the universal language of kindness." – Author Unknown
- "Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer." – Dalai Lama
- Q: What do ducks eat for breakfast? A: Quacker Oats
- Q: What did one earthquake say to the other earthquake? A: It's not my fault.



Consider Your Dialysis Choices: Is Home Hemodialysis (HD) Right for You?

**Taken from the ESRD NCC Patient Toolkit*

Home Hemodialysis (HD)

Why it may work for you:

- Allows more independence and control of treatment and life choices.
- Permits more frequent or longer treatments than can be provided with in-center dialysis. This can lead to more waste products being removed and better lab results.
- You don't have to travel to a center to receive treatment.
- Many patients say they have more energy after treatments compared to how they feel after in-center dialysis.
- Dialysis staff members are available to answer questions on the phone.
- May make it easier to return to work or school.
- Allows you to travel. Supplies can be shipped to you anywhere in the United States, and the machine can go on an airplane.
- If you can learn to drive a car, you can learn to perform treatment at home.

What you may need to consider:

- Training is required and more involvement in your own care is necessary.
- You might need a care partner to help you with the treatments, depending on the procedures in your area, i.e., state regulations, program guidelines or facility rules. You can speak with your social worker to discuss available options.
- If you have a fistula or graft, you or your care partner will have to put in your needles.
- You'll need storage space for supplies.
- You may need to upgrade the existing plumbing and/or electrical outlets in your home to meet requirements for the machine.

- You will need to attend monthly clinic visits to review your treatment plan.
- Your monthly utility bills could increase, based on additional water and electric usage; you might want to check with your center regarding any additional expenses.
- Some programs will not allow you to have pets in your home.

Nocturnal Option:

- Takes place while you sleep.
- Could limit your sleeping position.
- Uses time you sleep for treatment; freeing your days.
- May allow you to return to work or school full time.
- May have fewer diet restrictions and possible improved labs with the additional hours available for receiving treatment.



- ◇ Would you like to fit dialysis into your schedule?
- ◇ Would you prefer to stay home for treatment or go to a dialysis center three times a week?
- ◇ Do you want the control of delivering your own treatments?
- ◇ Is travelling important to you?