



GOOD HEALTH

P A T I E N T N E W S L E T T E R



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 DOES THE NETWORK DO?

- Helps patients learn about kidney failure and treatment options, including transplant and home dialysis
- 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
- Assists patients with finding dialysis treatment



HOW DO WE INVOLVE PATIENTS?

Patients serve on boards and other committees at the Network. Locally, patients may serve as Patient Representatives in the facility and help mentor new patients or lead support groups. Patients identify education needs for staff and patients to help improve patient care.

What Can the Network Do?

We Can:

- Investigate your grievance
- Educate the staff and/or you about issues related to the grievance
- Advocate for the rights of all patients
- Mediate difficult situations between you and facility staff
- Provide the location and/or contact information of other dialysis units and/or physicians
- Collaborate with patients who are having a hard time finding a dialysis facility
- Provide general information on Medicare ESRD Coverage
- Provide educational materials about ESRD and treatment options

We Cannot:

- Direct a dialysis facility, transplant center, or physician to accept a patient
- Request that a specific staff member provide your care
- Change or get involved in facility personnel policies and procedures
- Assist with monetary compensation, payment of bills, or transportation arrangements
- Provide expert guidance on Medicare reimbursement issues
- Override State or Federal licensing/certification requirements



WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?

A grievance is a written or spoken complaint about the care or services provided by 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 an internal grievance process, and if you have a problem at your facility, the Network encourages you to follow the facility's process. If you used your facility's process, and the grievance

was not solved by talking with the staff, or if you are uncomfortable talking to the staff, you can call the Network. With your permission, the Network can work with you and the facility to find a solution to your concern.

There is also a 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: <https://esrdnetworks.org/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1>.

Tips to Resolve Your Grievance

You have the right to make your concerns known. If you are dissatisfied with the care or treatment you receive, you have the right to tell someone and receive a response. Every facility has a grievance process in place. Ask your manager or social worker about the process in your facility.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS:

- First, try talking to your nurse, doctor, or social worker about the problem.
- It can take time to find a good solution. Give the staff member a chance to resolve the problem.
- Be involved, follow up, and ask questions.
- If you feel that the problem is not being addressed, you can talk to upper management.
- If you feel the issue still is not being addressed, contact your facility's corporate office. Most facilities have these contact numbers posted in the lobby.
- If you feel you need extra help with your concern, you may contact Network 8 at 1-877-936-9260 and file a grievance.
- You also have the right to contact your local State Survey Agency.
 - ◊ Alabama: 1-800-356-9596
 - ◊ Mississippi: 1-800-227-7308
 - ◊ Tennessee: 1-877-287-0010



THINGS TO KNOW:

- Your healthcare team meets every month (the nurse, social worker, dietician, medical director, regional manager, technical, and others may attend at times).
- They discuss the concerns that have been brought to them in this meeting, along with other things.
- Your facility may have a patient representative whom you can talk to about your concern.
- The Dialysis Patient Grievance Toolkit is available online: <https://esrdnetworks.org/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1>. It is a guide written by patients for patients to help understand the grievance process.



Like us on Facebook by searching for ESRD Networks 8 and 14!

To file a grievance, please contact Network 8 by phone at 1-877-936-9260, by email at nw8info@allianthealth.org, or by mail at 775 Woodlands Pkwy, Suite 310, Ridgeland, MS 39157. Visit www.esrdnetwork8.org for more information.

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