



# GOOD HEALTH

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

## END STAGE RENAL DISEASE-QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Quality Incentive Program or QIP is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) program that ties your clinic's Medicare payments to how well the clinic takes care of you. Some of the measures include:

- How well your clinic prevented infections during treatments
- Dialysis access type (fistulas and grafts are better than catheters)
- Kt/V or how well they cleaned your blood during treatments
- Pain and depression screenings

All the numbers for these measures are collected and calculated, then the results are posted on your clinic's Performance Score Certificate (PSC). For payment year 2020, your clinic must receive a score

of at least 59 to not receive a payment decrease from CMS. Clinics are required by CMS to post their PSC in both English and Spanish. You can also find your clinic's performance score on each individual measure through the Dialysis Facility Compare website (<https://www.medicare.gov/dialysisfacilitycompare>). Below, you can see what the PSC looks like. It should be posted in an area that all patients can see. Did your clinic make the grade?



The Total Performance Score (TPS) is a single number that tells how a facility performed in the ESRD QIP and determines whether CMS will lower that facility's payments by up to two percent for an entire year. Along with other CMS ESRD programs, it provides information on the quality of care provided by facilities. Each facility earns points for its performance in 2018 based on one of two factors 1) how close the facility's performance is to the national median in 2016, and 2) how much the facility improved relative to its previous performance in 2017. Since the score can be calculated differently for each facility, the TPS should not be used alone to compare different facilities. Please use the Dialysis Facility Compare website for more information about comparing dialysis facilities in your area.

Dialysis facilities are required to post this certificate prominently in a patient area. This certificate expires December 31, 2020.

To learn more about ESRD QIP and other CMS quality initiatives, visit: ESRD QIP webpage on CMS.gov: [www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/ESRDQIP](https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/ESRDQIP) ESRD Network Coordinating Center: [esrdcc.org](https://www.esrdcc.org) Dialysis Facility Compare: [medicare.gov/DialysisFacilityCompare](https://www.medicare.gov/DialysisFacilityCompare)

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Maybe you have heard the term quality of life (QOL), but what does it mean? QOL refers to the overall well-being of a person, and it can mean something different to each person. Your QOL is defined by you. It includes your physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being. What are some things you can do to improve your QOL during COVID-19?

- Read a book or magazine
- Take a short walk
- Plant flowers or vegetables
- Talk to a friend (Zoom, Facetime, or by phone)
- Meditation

- Stretch or try Yoga
- Write in a journal
- Listen to music
- Take a drive
- Attend an online church service
- Volunteer or look for employment opportunities



Think about the things that you enjoy or try something new!

Resource: <https://bit.ly/ForbesQualityofLife>



# TICKET to Work

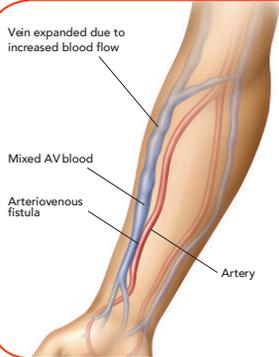
The Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program provides access to employment services for those who are ages 18-64, receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and want to work. Ticket to Work connects

you with free services to help you decide if working is right for you. The program can help prepare you for work or help you find a job. Services include job counseling, vocational rehabilitation, and job placement and training. These services can be provided by Employment Networks (EN) or your State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. Take the first step and call 1-866-968-7842 to learn more about the program or to see if their services can help you. Please visit the Ticket to Work website for frequently asked questions about the program, <https://choosework.ssa.gov/about/faqs/index.html>.

## VASCULAR ACCESS

A well-working access is key to getting good dialysis. A fistula is usually the first choice because it lasts longer, and there is less chance of infection. A catheter is the last choice and should be used for the shortest time possible. Talk to your doctor to determine which access is best for you.

### Know the 3 dialysis access types

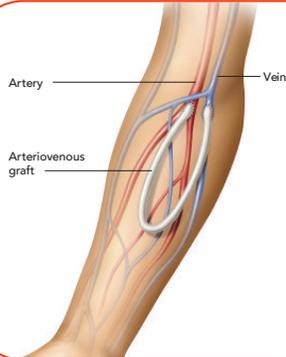


#### Arteriovenous (AV) fistula

An AV FISTULA is a surgical connection between an artery and a vein.

Fistulas are the preferred access for long term dialysis because they last longer, are less prone to infections and clotting, provide better blood flow and can be relied on for predictable performance.

A fistula is created under the skin during an outpatient procedure and is usually ready for initial use approximately four months after placement.

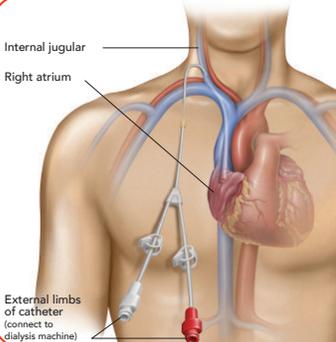


#### Arteriovenous (AV) graft

An AV GRAFT utilizes a soft synthetic tube implanted under the skin to connect an artery to a vein.

AV grafts can be used repeatedly for needle placement, but are more prone to infections and clotting than fistulas. Grafts are typically used for patients with smaller veins that will not properly develop into a suitable fistula.

AV grafts can be used after approximately two to three weeks.



#### Central Venous Catheter (CVC)

A CVC is a "Y"-shaped plastic tube placed under the skin of your neck, into your chest. The "stem" of the catheter rests in your heart. The two ends of the "Y" remain external through the skin of your chest.

Catheters are designed for temporary, short-term use (weeks to months only) and are the most prone to infections and clotting.

Catheters can be used immediately after placement.

Resource: <https://bit.ly/3DialysisTypes>

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

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