

Things the Network may be able to do:

- Investigate a complaint/grievance
- Contact your dialysis facility or transplant center to discuss your complaint/grievance.
- Educate the staff and/or you about issues related to the complaint/grievance.
- Refer the complaint/grievance to another appropriate agency.
- Visit the dialysis facility or transplant center to provide mediation.
- Be an advocate for patient rights.
- Provide you with names and contact numbers of professionals you can speak to at your clinic's corporate offices.
- Provide you with information on Medicare regulations and your rights under Medicare.

Things the Network cannot do:

- Request or force 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 or personnel policies and procedures.
- Get a physician or staff member "fired" or transferred.



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Patient
Information
Series

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES



Promoting and facilitating high quality care standards for dialysis and kidney transplant patients in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

ESRD Network Responsibilities

Federal regulations require dialysis facilities to ensure that patients are aware of their rights and responsibilities, including their right to process a grievance.

The Network believes that every patient should receive quality care. The Network is available to help patients who have complaints regarding the quality of care provided in their dialysis unit. The Network role is to serve as an investigator, facilitator, coordinator, and/or educator.

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COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

As a dialysis patient, it is important to know what to do if you have a complaint or issue with the level of care that you receive. Here are some frequently asked questions that relate to handling complaints and grievances.

What exactly is a “complaint”?

A complaint is a request for assistance regarding concern(s) about ESRD issues including (but not limited to) care, treatment, or providers.

What exactly is a “grievance”?

A grievance is a request for a formal investigation of a complaint involving an ESRD healthcare facility, physician, or other provider.

Who can file a complaint/grievance?

Patients, family members, staff or anyone else who has concerns about a dialysis facility or transplant center can file a complaint/grievance. It does not matter if you are on hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, or have received a kidney transplant. It is always important to let someone know you have concerns about your medical care.

What do I do about my complaint?

The decision of what to do is always up to you - the patient. Here are a couple of things you can consider when trying to resolve the issue on your own:

- Try talking to someone at the dialysis or transplant facility where you receive care. Some of the healthcare team you can talk to are: social workers, nurses, doctors, and clinic managers.
- Submit a facility grievance. Each facility has its own grievance process, which explains what to do with your complaint within the dialysis facility or transplant center.

Why should I tell anyone?

- To make sure safe care is being provided. The most important purpose of complaints is to protect you and other patients. All dialysis facilities and transplant centers are required to follow guidelines for treatment under Medicare. When a facility is not following the guidelines, it is important for someone to know about it so that the situation can be improved.
- To work through a problem. Every patient and staff member has a different personality, so it is possible that there may be a communication problem at some point. If a problem is not addressed, it can potentially become worse. By talking to someone about your concern, there is a chance that it will make you feel more comfortable and improve communication between staff and patients.
- To help others.

What if I need additional help with the problem?

Contact the Heartland Kidney Network at the address shown on the back of this brochure. The Network acts as a neutral third party to help mediate concerns. Mediation means that we will listen to both sides and try to assist each in reaching the best possible outcome.

Who should I call?

The decision of who to call is always up to the patient. The Network has an experienced staff available Monday through Friday to listen to your complaint and assist in mediation with your ESRD healthcare provider. The Network can also assist you in filing a complaint or grievance.