

Do patients have rights? What are they?

Yes, patients do have rights, *and they have responsibilities*. As a patient, you should know what your rights and responsibilities are. Your dialysis or transplant center has a written statement about patient rights and responsibilities. This statement should have been presented and explained when you became a patient at the facility.

If you have not seen the statement of your rights and responsibilities, please ask for a copy. The Network can also provide you with a copy of our general patient rights and responsibilities, however it may not be specific to your unit. The Network believes that patients should have a voice in decisions that affect them and the care they receive.

According to federal regulations, ALL dialysis and transplant patients should be:

- “Fully informed of their rights and of all rules and regulations governing patient conduct and responsibilities.”
- “Afforded the opportunity to participate in the planning of their medical treatment and to refuse to participate in experimental research.”
- “Encouraged and assisted to understand and exercise their rights.”



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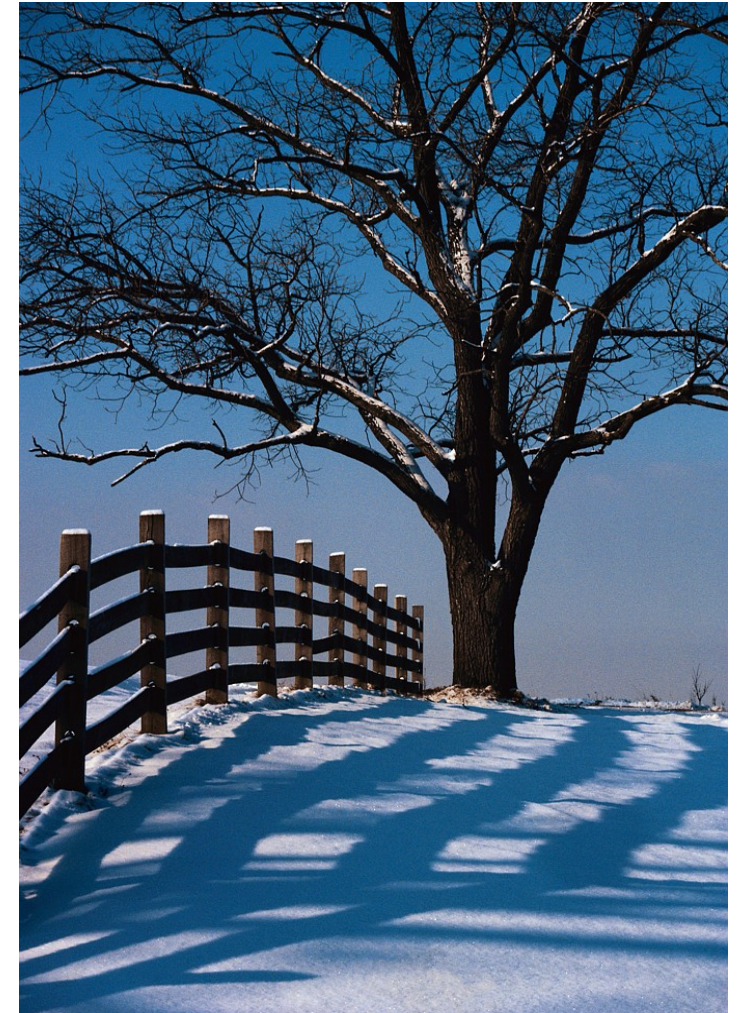
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SERVICES FOR PATIENTS



What is ESRD Network 4?

ESRD (End Stage Renal Disease) is a Medicare term used to describe patients that require dialysis treatments or a transplant for survival.

ESRD Network 4 is one of 18 Networks throughout the United States sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide service and support to ESRD providers, patients and their families. We do so by:

- Developing standards to improve patient care.
- Providing educational resources for patients, families and renal professionals.
- Promoting vocational rehabilitation to help patients remain working or return to the work force.
- Supporting facilities and staff in resolving patient-care issues.
- Assisting in resolving patient complaints.
- Collecting and reporting statistics to dialysis centers and CMS.

What services does Network 4 provide for patients?

Our Patient Services Coordinator (PSC) can assist with the following:

- Provide treatment information to help patients make informed decisions about their dialysis care.

- Provide information on dialysis facilities and transplant centers.
- Provide current information on Medicare ESRD/transplant coverage.
- Provide a list of community organizations that assist dialysis/transplant patients.
- Respond to concerns/complaints about patient care.
- Assist patients/facilities experiencing difficulty in making travel dialysis arrangements.
- Provide a list of dialysis/transplant patient support groups.

What can't Network 4 help patients with?

We cannot help with the following:

- Recommendations on specific doctors or clinics.
- Financial assistance.
- Transportation service.
- Licensing dialysis facilities or staff.
- Obtaining medical insurance.
- Tracing payments or status of applications.
- Assist with requesting a specific staff member to provide your care.
- Change or get involved in a facility or personnel policies/procedures.
- Require a dialysis unit to accept a patient.
- Get a physician or staff member “fired” or relocated.

Can patients call Network 4 if they have a concern or complaint about their care?

Yes, patients can call Network 4 if they have a concern about any aspect of their dialysis care. The Patient Services Coordinator (PSC) will be able to advise patients of the proper steps to take to address the problem with their dialysis unit. Patients can also use the following steps to solve the concern on their own:

1. Talk with your doctor, nurse or social worker to see if they can help you solve your problem. Your medical team is available to help with problems as they arise.
2. If talking with your doctor, nurse or social worker does not solve the problem, then you may choose to file a grievance with the facility. If you do not know what the grievance procedure is at your facility, you should ask for your unit's written policy or ask who you should contact for the information.
3. If you have filed a grievance with the dialysis unit and you feel that the problem is not resolved, or if you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you can call the Network at (412) 325-2250 or toll free (800) 548-9205 to discuss your concerns.