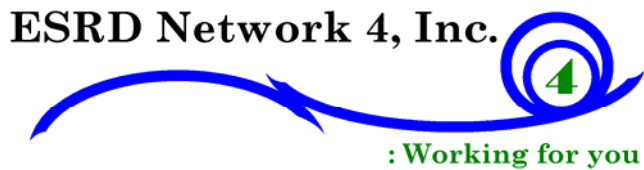


# Memorandum



**Date:** September 8, 2009

**From:** Suzanne M. Kirschbaum RN CNN *smb*  
Director, Quality Improvement

**To:** Facility Administrators, Nurse Managers,  
Quality Improvement Staff

**Regarding:** Enclosed Quality Improvement Documents

## Quality Improvement Documents Enclosed:

- Network 4 *Clinical Performance Goals 2009-2010*
- Anemia Management – A Network-wide Quality Improvement Tools and Information (Project Launch Date September 1, 2009)*
- Save the Date Announcement – October 1, 2009 – “Insights Into Erythropoiesis-Stimulating Agent (ESA) Responsiveness in Patients with Anemia on Dialysis”

Share these documents with your staff.

With the release of the Conditions for Coverage Final Rule in October 2008, there is an expectation that dialysis facilities develop an internal Quality Assessment and Performance Plan (QAPI) to promote continuous improvement. The Network Medical Review Board has established performance goals based on past performance, CMS thresholds and the NKF-K/DOQI Clinical Practice Guidelines. The ESRD Network 4 *Clinical Performance Goals 2009-2010* document provides measures to assess facility-level patient care processes and outcomes, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

An Anemia Management Quality Initiative Project was developed due to recent concerns with the national increase in patients with a hemoglobin level below 10 g/dL and the associated mortality. This may be a result from the recent reduction in the Medicare payment formula for ESA administration and the “black box” warning placed on ESA medications indicating an increased risk of death with hemoglobin levels greater than 12 g/dL. The Network Medical Review Board is concerned as dialysis providers struggle to maintain hemoglobin levels within a narrow range. We have developed an *Anemia Management Quality Improvement Toolkit* (enclosed) to provide assistance for facility-level anemia managers. An Anemia Management educational WebEx is being offered on October 1, 2009 (see WebEx announcement for details).

## What’s Our Goal?

The Network goal is to combine efforts with renal facilities to improve performance in the delivery of quality patient care. You may use the Clinical Performance Goals Document to develop your own QAPIs. You are encouraged to participate in our Anemia Management Quality Improvement Project to ensure patients have adequate hemoglobin levels (i.e.  $\geq 10$  g/dL).

## Anemia Management Quality Improvement Project -- Next Steps

NO tracking sheets or special data elements are required at this time to submit to the Network office. The Network office will evaluate your success with anemia management by reviewing the results from the Lab Data Collection, which concludes in the second quarter of 2010. In March 2010, you will be asked to complete a facility assessment scan to measure facility best practices.

## Questions?

Should you have questions or need any additional information, please call me at the Network office: 412-325-2250.

Note that each facility was provided with a limited supply of materials. You may supplement your packet by downloading information from the Network 4 website at <http://www.esrdnetwork4.org>. Look for this material on the “Facility Resources” or “Quality Improvement” pages.

Thank you for supporting the efforts to develop, implement, evaluate and revise plans that result in improvements in patient care.