

NOTICE Initiative- National Opportunity to Improve Care in ESRD

Project Fact Sheet

What?

- The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has awarded a 2-year contract to the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET) and its partners, the University of Michigan, Kidney Epidemiology and Cost Center (UM-KECC), and the Renal Network of the Upper Midwest, Inc. (Renal Network 11) to develop and use resources that will reduce infections in dialysis facilities.
- The goal of the project is to develop and test an Infection Control Worksheet and guidance for using this worksheet. The worksheet will be used by CMS surveyors assessing the extent to which dialysis facility staff are adhering to best and required infection control practices for that setting. It will also be used by dialysis facilities to assess the extent to which their staff are complying with recommended infection control practices.

Why?

- Despite advances in dialysis-related technology and documented improvements in many processes of care over the last decade, chronic dialysis patients in the US continue to have poor outcomes compared to other industrialized nations.
- Evidence suggests that infection control guidelines are not uniformly practiced in US dialysis facilities.
- In 2007, 12% of US dialysis patients were hospitalized due to septicemia and 16% of all deaths were attributable to an infectious cause. Many of these infections are preventable through the use of evidence-based infection control practices.

How?

- The project team will first develop lists of required and best infection control practices. These lists will be based on a review of all available literature and endorsed by the project's Technical Expert Panel.
- Based on these lists, an Infection Control Worksheet (ICWS) will be developed that facility surveyors can use to assess the extent to which required infection control practices are being followed.
- Dialysis facilities will be recruited to participate in a pilot test of the ICWS. They will be visited by an infection control expert who will administer the ICWS. The facilities will subsequently receive education about the required and best practices, and how they can be implemented, and then the ICWS will be administered a second time.
- Participating facilities will share data related to infection rates and safety culture, which will be pooled to assess the impact of the ICWS's use. Aside from time required to submit data and host two visits from an infection control expert, facilities will receive all technical assistance at no charge.
- An optional part of the project involves the development and testing of resources designed to educate facilities about infection control practices and how to create a culture in which

these practices will be consistently followed. If funded, these activities will involve different facilities than those participating in the ICWS pilot testing.

Who?

- A cross section of 40 dialysis facilities selected from four Renal Networks based on a stratified selection criteria will be invited to participate in the ICWS pilot testing.

For Information Contact:

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