

# The Role of the Network During an Emergency or Disaster Situation

Northwest Renal Network (ESRD Network 16) is funded via a contract with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. The Network region encompasses five states and services are provided in the areas of Quality Improvement; Technical Assistance; Education; Community Resources; Patient and Provider concerns, complaints and grievances; and data collection and management. ESRD Networks are required to conduct emergency preparedness and response activities to assist the renal patient and provider community.

As of December 31, 2008, the Network's patient and provider population was as follows:

Alaska 370	Idaho 973	Oregon 2809	Montana 622	Washington 5,253	Northwest Renal Network Total: 10,061
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In preparation for an emergency Northwest Renal Network will:

- Encourage dialysis facilities to plan for emergency situations
- Provide technical assistance in the development of emergency plans
- Provide educational materials to the patient and provider community on topics related to emergency/disaster
- Develop an internal Network plan for preparedness and response, including arrangements with back up Networks if local operations are impaired

During an emergency response, and per HIPAA and CMS policy, the Northwest Renal Network will:

- Disseminate central contact numbers for dialysis providers in the affected area, to assist patients and providers in coordinating the provision of dialysis services
- Post information regarding open and closed status of facilities on the [www.dialysisunits.com](http://www.dialysisunits.com) website, as well as the Network website [www.nwrenalnetwork.org](http://www.nwrenalnetwork.org).
- Assist patients in contacting dialysis providers to arrange treatment
- Assist family members in locating displaced patients
- Assist treating facilities to obtain necessary information to care for patients
- Work with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) or its contractor to maintain a database tracking system for patient whereabouts (dialysis centers and/or shelter locations)
- Host conference calls with CMS, providers, vendors, and other entities to coordinate care for the patients
- Enact back up Network arrangements if the operations of the Northwest Renal Network office are compromised. This Network has a CMS approved mutual back up agreement with the Southern California Renal Disease Council (ESRD Network #18 in Los Angeles).

Northwest Renal Network can be reached via telephone at 206-923-0714, fax at 206-923-0716, and through our website: [www.nwrenalnetwork.org](http://www.nwrenalnetwork.org) . Patients may use our toll-free number 1-800-262-1514. If the Northwest Renal Network is affected by the disaster/emergency and is unable to provide assistance, you may contact the Forum of ESRD Networks office at 1-866-901- ESRD (1-866-901-3773) for assistance from another Network.

**FACILITY COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE NETWORK DURING AN EMERGENCY OR DISASTER**

If your facility is not operational or is inaccessible during an emergency, please communicate this to the Network as soon as possible. This improves the ability of the Network to provide current information to assist patients, the renal community and emergency management personnel. In addition to using their own websites, Networks also are authorized to access the [www.dialysisunits.com](http://www.dialysisunits.com) website to enter updates to track facility status.

**Tip:** If the Northwest Renal Network is affected by the disaster/emergency and is unable to provide assistance, you may contact the Southern California Renal Disease Council (ESRD Network #18 in Los Angeles) for assistance: (323) 962-2020 or Patient Toll Free number (800) 637-4767.