



Network Consumer News

The Best is Yet to Come

Having chronic kidney disease has changed your life, but there are things you can do to reduce the impact on your lifestyle and income. With the exception of heavy physical labor, most patients are capable of performing the job tasks they did before they started dialysis. You may even choose to pursue a new dream! Here are some tips for getting started:

- **Talk with the social worker** about your goals for employment, school, volunteering, hobbies, and increased social or physical activities.
- **Contact a Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (WIPA) Organization** near you. Call 866-968-7842 or go to <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/oesp/providers.nsf/bystate>. WIPA can:
 - Answer your questions about how part-time, full-time, or seasonal work would affect your individual disability benefits and other benefits you may receive from Federal, state and local programs.
 - Respond to your questions about how work would affect your health care.
 - Discuss your individual goals, including possible barriers and the resources or services you would need to overcome any barriers.
 - Help you plan how to use work incentives or other benefits for a successful return to work.
- **Attend a National Work Incentive Seminar (WISE) event** or webinar. To locate events, go to <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/events.html>.
- **Call Maximus** – Social Security’s contractor for *Ticket to Work* (help returning to work) at 866-968-7842, or www.yourtickettowork.com.
- **Visit the Department of Labor’s Career One Stop website**, for tools to help job seekers and students: <http://www.careeronestop.org/>.
- **Contact the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office** in your area, and ask about their application process. To find your local VR office:

Alaska	http://www.labor.state.ak.us/dvr/	800-478-2815
Idaho	http://www.vr.idaho.gov/	208-334-3390
Montana	http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/vocrehab/mvr.shtml	877-296-1197
Oregon	http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/	877-277-0513
Washington	http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr/	800-637-5627



LEARNING POINT

Contact the VR Office in your area, and ask about their application process. A referral is not needed – you can contact them directly.

RELATED RESOURCES

Life Options

www.lifeoptions.org

- Employment: A Kidney Patient’s Guide to Working and Paying for Treatment

National Kidney Foundation

www.kidney.org

- Working With Chronic Kidney Disease

Fistula First Initiative

www.fistulafirst.org

- Patient Education

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A Change Would Do You Good



Did you know that catheters are not good for your health, and should be removed as soon as possible? Catheters should be for emergency and temporary use only. Some disadvantages or problems related to catheters:

- Clotting
- Infection
- Lower blood flow rates
- Vessel or vein damage
- It is harder to get good dialysis
- Discomfort
- They do not last long

Talk with your doctor about other access options as soon as possible!

When Things Go Wrong

The Network receives many calls from patients and providers who report conflict during dialysis. The dialysis setting is a challenging place to work and to receive treatment: little privacy, complex care, room temperature, noise, wait times, etc. Some days it is hard to extend our finest behavior to everyone we meet. Below are some steps you can take when problems occur:

- **Step One:** Talk to the staff member. The best time is before or after dialysis – when they are not providing care in the unit. Remember to show respect and be considerate. Taking a deep breath before the conversation might help.
- **Step Two:** Talk to the social worker or charge nurse. Sometimes asking for an appointment gives you the chance to speak in private and have their full attention.
- **Step Three:** File a grievance at the clinic – usually a written complaint using the facility's process.
- **Step Four:** Go outside the clinic. Northwest Renal Network welcomes calls and will work together with you and the facility toward solutions.

Nearly all problems can be worked out if the two parties are willing to talk with each other and seek a compromise, where neither side gets everything they want, but they do get a resolution they can live with. This makes for a setting that is comfortable for both patients and staff.

Northwest Renal Network can help navigate your journey with kidney disease.

Contact us for information and assistance with:

- Concerns about care
- Patient rights
- Questions about employment
- Treatment options
- Transplants
- Travel and dialysis
- Access to our library of resources



Request our News Bulletins by email at nwrnbulletins@nw16.esrd.net, and call our toll-free number if you have concerns about patient care: 800-262-1514.