



Network

Consumer News

LARGE PRINT VERSION

Keys to Coping with Your Concerns

“I feel like I’m treated like a number.”

“Why doesn’t the transplant facility return my phone calls?”

“I feel like the staff’s attitude toward me is negative.”

If the above comments sound familiar to you, there is good news – you are not alone. When things go wrong in your dialysis or transplant facility, and you are not able to work it out with the facility staff, there is help for you by calling Northwest Renal Network.

Top Five Reported Patient Concerns

The staff at the Network assists patients and providers with difficult situations and helps to resolve issues. Many of the phone calls received by the Network involve patient concerns. Though each call is unique, there are common themes. Here are the top five concerns reported to the Network by people like you:

1. Concerns related to the treatment or the quality of care; these might be problems with insertion of the needles, disagreement about treatment orders, staff not washing hands or changing gloves.
2. Concerns related to the staff in the facility; examples include lack of professionalism, insensitive behavior, poor customer service, conflict between patient and staff or between staff members.

3. Report of a patient transfer or discharge from the facility; these calls are usually related to an incident or conflict that occurred.
4. Environment – concerns that the facility is not clean, temperature is too cold, or dialysis equipment needs repair.
5. Barriers to getting treatment in a dialysis center – patient cannot find a chronic facility for dialysis, often related to behavior issues or insurance limits.

Below are some tips to consider if you experience any concerns at your treatment facility. This information is not meant to be an exhaustive list of solutions, as every patient and facility situation should be considered on an individual basis. If you are not comfortable going to someone in your clinic about a problem, call the Network toll-free for help. Northwest Renal Network welcomes calls, and will work together with patients and facilities toward solutions.

Solutions

- If you feel uncomfortable, express your concerns to the staff member. Do not wait until the problem repeats itself. The staff does not know how you feel until you tell them.
- Show respect and be considerate. Avoid yelling or using profanity.
- Consider a cooling off period.
- Consider putting your concerns in writing.
- Talk to the social worker, charge nurse or facility administrator. Sometimes asking for an appointment gives you the chance to speak in private and have undivided attention.
- Ask to see a copy of the facility's grievance policy, patient rights and responsibilities.
- Remain calm and open to what facility staff has to say.
- Show respect for the staff and avoid personal attacks; instead focus on the issue that is troubling you. Think of how you can work together to fix the problem.

- Examine your own feelings, stress level and behaviors. Take responsibility for your actions and make suggestions to the staff.
 - Consider compromise. Ask the facility staff to explain all the options.
 - Ask to attend and participate in your next care plan meeting with the healthcare team.
 - Get involved. Ask about joining patient groups that your clinic or community may have.
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LEARNING POINT

The Network welcomes calls from patients, and will work together with patients and facilities toward solutions.

RELATED WEB RESOURCES

Dialysis Facility Compare

www.medicare.gov/dialysis

- To compare facilities if you move, travel, or need a new center
- Find helpful information and other renal related resources

Kidney School

www.kidneyschool.org

- Working with Your Healthcare Team
- Coping with Kidney Disease

If you would like the information but do not have access to the Internet, please contact us:

Northwest Renal Network

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Seattle, WA 98116

206.923.0714

Fax 206.923.0716

Patient

Toll-Free Number

1.800.262.1514

www.nwrenalnetwork.org

PATIENT EVENTS

- The National Kidney Foundation’s Fall 2010 Patient & Care Partner Education Symposium is scheduled for September 19, 2010, in Tualatin, OR. The topic is “Lessons in Living with Kidney Disease: Knowledge, Inspiration, & Support.” The event is free. Register online at <http://www.kidneyca.org/programs.asp> or call 888-427-5653, ext. 116.
- The Alaska NKF presents the Inaugural 2010 Anchorage Kidney Walk on September 25, 2010. For details, contact Kristie Lemmon at Kristie.lemmon@kidney.org or call 907-223-1562.

Are you thinking about going back to work or school? Ask your facility social worker for help, or call the Network’s confidential toll-free number at 800-262-1514.

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