

# Kidney *Chronicles*

IPRO END-STAGE RENAL DISEASE NETWORK OF NEW YORK

APRIL 2016

HELPFUL TIPS  
TO EMPOWER  
ESRD PATIENTS  
AS CONSUMERS



Improving Healthcare  
for the Common Good®

## Improving Your Dialysis Experience Tips for Successful Communication

**A**s a dialysis patient, transplant recipient, or a family member/care partner of a person with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) you may have questions or concerns about your care. You should feel comfortable speaking with your health care team, and the staff at your facility. Good communication will give you a chance to play an active role in your healthcare, can lower your stress levels and will improve your quality of life. Here are some tips to help you communicate in an effective way.

### 1. Keep focused.

Stay focused on the present situation. It is important not to bring up old issues that could take attention away from the current concerns you may have. If you keep focused, it will allow more time for both you and the facility staff member to pay attention to the problem at hand and work together to fix it successfully.

### 2. Aim for compromise.

Successful communication usually means finding a solution that both sides can be happy with.

### 3. Listen carefully.

To have a successful communication, both you and the facility staff member will have to listen when the other is speaking. While you are communicating with staff members about your concerns, make sure that you are not distracted by anything, including other people, your cell phone or other electronic devices. Listen carefully to what the staff member is saying.

### 4. Consider all points of view.

Try to see the situation from the other person's perspective.

## How the Network Serves You

- Advocates for you;
- Answers your questions about treatment, modality choices or other issues;
- Develops and provides educational materials for you and your family;
- Works with renal professionals to improve the care given to you;
- Helps keep you informed and updated to support your involvement in your care and treatment options; and
- Evaluates and resolves grievances.

**In an emergency,  
if you can't reach  
your facility,  
contact us.**

## Tips for Successful Communication *continued from page 1*

### 5. Stay calm.

Your healthcare team is committed to helping you or your loved one achieve the best quality of life and care possible. It is important to always speak and act in a calm and respectful way. Also, by staying calm, you will be able to be effective in talking about your concerns.

## What if I am not satisfied after speaking with my healthcare team?

In most cases, positive and effective communication can answer questions and satisfy concerns. However, if you are not happy about something after meeting with facility staff, you still have the option of contacting the Network to answer your health care related questions or to file a Network grievance to have Network staff assist you in resolving a problem.

### What is a grievance?

As an ESRD patient, if you are not satisfied with the care you receive at your clinic, you have options to file a formal grievance. This is an a process where you are requesting that your problem be investigated and discussed formally with the professional staff at your clinic and if you are not satisfied with the resolution, you may file a formal grievance with the Network or the State Department of Health.

### Filing a Grievance at Your Dialysis Facility

Federal law requires that all dialysis facilities have a grievance process in place to address patient concerns.

It is a good idea to learn about your facility's process for dealing with grievances. If you want to file a grievance at your facility, you should speak with your dialysis social worker or the facility's administrator.

It is NOT mandatory that you follow your facility's grievance process before contacting the Network. However, this can be a fast easy way to fix a problem at your dialysis facility and we encourage that you consider it as an option. If you cannot resolve your concern by talking to a staff member at your facility or if you are uncomfortable talking to staff, you can contact your Network's Patient Services Director.

### Filing a Grievance with the ESRD Network

The Network works closely with the State Department of Health to make sure that dialysis facilities and transplant centers meet all government standards. The Network reviews grievances dealing with the quality and safety of care provided in dialysis and transplant facilities. Network level grievances may be filed by patients, their representatives, family members, care partners, healthcare professionals, advocates, or the State Department of Health.

You can file a grievance with your Network by phone, fax, or USPS mail. (See contact info below.)

To learn more about grievances filed at the Network level, be sure to check out our website at: <http://esrd.ipro.org/who-we-serve/file-a-grievance>.

### To file a grievance, please contact:

**End-Stage Renal Disease Network of New York**

**1979 Marcus Avenue, Lake Success, NY 11042-1072**

**Main: (516) 209-5578 • Patient Toll-Free: (800) 238-3773 • Fax: (516) 326-8929**

**E-mail: [info@nw2.esrd.net](mailto:info@nw2.esrd.net) • Web: [esrd.ipro.org](http://esrd.ipro.org)**



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Developed by IPRO ESRD Network of New York while under contract with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.  
Contract HHSM-500-2016-00020C