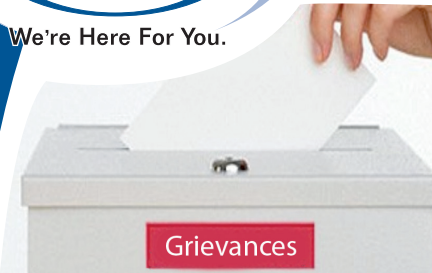


MY NETWORK: GRIEVANCES



We're Here For You.



Federal regulations require dialysis clinics to ensure that you are aware of your rights and responsibilities, including your right to process a grievance. The ESRD Networks are contracted with Medicare to respond to your grievances with a dialysis clinic or transplant center. The Heartland Kidney Network serves Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

The Heartland Kidney Network (The Network) believes that every patient should receive quality care. The Network is available to help you if you have grievances regarding the quality of care provided in your dialysis

clinic. The Network's role is to serve as an investigator, facilitator, coordinator, referral agent, and/or educator to address your grievances. The Network encourages you to use the Grievance Procedure within your clinic prior to contacting The Network, but you always have the right to contact us to share your concern.

WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?

According to the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS):

- “A **grievance** is a verbal or written report of a health care risk of any kind, or a violation of an obligation which has occurred in one or more instances and presents a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of a patient, or places the patient unnecessarily in a high-risk situation.”
- “**Health Care Risk** – A medical situation that if not quickly resolved would have immediate negative impact on the patient's health, putting the beneficiary's health in jeopardy. Or it may be a situation that resulted in the death of a patient and is a potential risk to the health of other patients.”

(Source: NCC/CMS Annual Meeting Presentation February, 2008)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who can file a grievance?

You, a family member and/or caregiver, staff, or anyone who has concerns about a dialysis clinic or transplant center can file a grievance.

Does it matter what type and where I get dialysis?

No, it does not matter if you are on hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, in-center, at home, or have received a kidney transplant.

Why is it important to let someone know you have concerns about your medical care?

- To make sure safe care is being provided
- To protect you and other patients
- To work through a problem – Every patient and staff member has a different personality, so it is possible that there may be a communication problem at some point.

For more information or to file a grievance please contact the Heartland Kidney Network at: Heartland Kidney Network • 7306 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy. • Suite 230 • Kansas City, MO 64153
Toll-Free Patient Line: (800) 444-9965 • net12@nw12.esrd.net • www.heartlandkidney.org

- If a problem is not addressed, it can potentially become worse
- To make you feel more comfortable and improve communication between you and staff
- To make sure the Medicare guidelines are being followed – All dialysis clinics and transplant centers are required to follow guidelines for treatment. When a clinic is not following the guidelines, it is important for someone to know so improvements can be made.

What do I do about my grievance?

The decision of what to do is always up to you – the patient. Here are a couple of things you can consider when trying to resolve the issue on your own:

- Talk to someone at the dialysis clinic or transplant center where you receive care, which can include clinic managers, social workers, nurses, and/or your doctor.
- Report your grievance to the clinic. Each clinic has its own grievance process, which explains what to do with your grievance within the dialysis clinic or transplant center.

What if I need additional help with the problem?

- You can contact the Heartland Kidney Network by phone or in writing. The Network acts as a neutral third party to help mediate concerns. Mediation means that we will listen to both sides and try to assist each in reaching the best possible outcome.
- The Network has an experienced staff available Monday through Friday.
- You can contact the Network, by phone at 1-800-444-9965, by mail at 7306 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy, Suite 230, Kansas City, MO 64153, or email at net12@nw12esrd.net.

What are some things The Network may be able to do & cannot do?

- Can investigate a complaint/grievance
- Can contact your dialysis clinic or transplant center to discuss your grievance
- Can educate the staff and/or you about issues related to the grievance
- Can refer the grievance to another appropriate agency
- Can provide mediation on the phone or on-site at the dialysis clinic or transplant center
- Can be an advocate for your rights
- Can provide you with names and contact numbers of professionals you can speak to at your clinic's corporate offices
- Can provide you with information on Medicare regulations and your rights under Medicare
- Cannot require a dialysis clinic, transplant center, and/or physician to accept you as a patient
- Cannot request that a specific staff member provide your care or get them fired
- Cannot change clinic or personnel policies and procedures

MY QUESTIONS

Ask your Care Team: Who do I talk to when I have a concern about my care? What is the grievance process at this clinic? What if I feel like I will be treated differently if I share a grievance with the clinic or the Network?