



Get Connected with... *Net Link*



Find out what's *new*, what's *due* & what's *upcoming*...

Please **POST** for all staff and personnel to read.

February 2010



#### **CMS Updates:**

Medicare has revised (as of December 2009) the “Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis and Kidney Transplant Services” handbook. Please visit our website and share this information with all your patients. We would encourage you to print a copy to place in the waiting area or have available to share with patients or family members upon request. You can find this new booklet in two locations on our Network website. Please save this information for future access to the booklet.

[www.esrdnetwork.org/Our Network/News.asp](http://www.esrdnetwork.org/Our%20Network/News.asp) **OR** [www.esrdnetwork.org/Patients/Medicare.asp](http://www.esrdnetwork.org/Patients/Medicare.asp)



#### **Medicare Part D Update:**

CMS Part D 2010 Standard Benefit Model Plan Details

Here are the highlights for the CMS defined Standard Benefit Plans for 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. This “Standard Benefit Plan” is the minimum allowable plan to be offered. The details of the 2010 plan will not be released until mid-April 2009. As we learn details, they will be added to the highlights and chart below.

- ▶▶ Initial Deductible:  
from \$295 in 2009 to \$310\* in 2010
- ▶▶ Initial Coverage Limit:  
from \$2,700 in 2009 to \$2,830\* in 2010
- ▶▶ Out-of-Pocket Threshold:  
from \$4,350 in 2009 to \$4,550\* in 2010
- ▶▶ Minimum Cost-sharing in the Catastrophic Coverage Portion of the Benefit:  
from \$2.40 for generics and \$6.00 for other drugs in 2009 to \$2.50 for generic or preferred drug that is a multi-source drug and \$6.30\* for all other drugs in 2010
- ▶▶ Maximum Co-payments below the Out-of-Pocket Threshold for certain Low Income Full Subsidy Eligible Enrollees: from \$2.40 for generics and \$6.00 for other drugs in 2009 to \$2.50 for generic or preferred drug that is a multi-source drug and \$6.30\* for all other drugs in 2010





## Updates from the Data Department:

*It's that time again!* Please be on the look-out for your facilities 2009 Annual CMS-2744 Report. This is a summary of your facilities patient census, treatment count, vocational rehabilitation, and number of staff & open positions as of 12/31/2009. It also includes the total number of events that were reported to the Network during 2009, along with the total number of patients receiving Frequent Dialysis as of 12/31/2009. This report will be mailed out to each dialysis facility at the end of the 1st week of February in a **RED ENVELOPE**. Complete all of the highlighted areas of the report and **MAIL** the **ORIGINAL** copy back to the Network **NO LATER THAN 2/17/2010**. All of the data reported on your 2744 will be forwarded to the United States Congress for the use of annual budgeting for the ESRD Medicare program, as well as statistical analysis. With that said, your accurate and timely submission is critical for all parties involved to meet each required deadline. As always, feel free to contact the Network Data Department with any questions regarding the completion of this report.

**Reminder:** Please pay special attention when emailing any attachments to the Network office and verify that there is NO PATIENT INFORMATION in any of the documents. CMS requires Network 14 to report ALL emails received that contain patient information including the facility and person they are received from. Emailing patient information is a HIPAA violation and is punishable with fines or jail time. Fax or phone calls are the best ways to convey patient information with Network 14 staff.



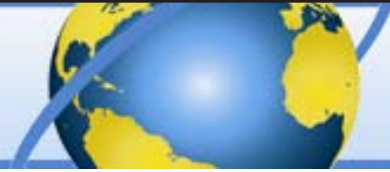
## Calling all Medical Directors, Renal Nurses, Dietitians, and Social Workers Share this information with your patients

The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) is pleased to announce an updated version of the popular patient education brochure, The Iron Story is now available. This brochure provides information regarding the importance of iron, as well as the effects of having too little iron in the body. In addition, it describes anemia and how it affects the kidneys. The Iron Story discusses the importance of intravenous (IV) iron usage and the role of erythropoietin stimulating agent (ESA) to keep blood count high and prevent anemia.

AAKP receives thousands of calls, emails and fax requests from patients and health care workers asking for information on iron and anemia. The Iron Story provides information available that gives patients a basic understanding of how iron deficiency can lead to anemia and how anemia can prevent individuals from living productive lives.”

The Iron Story is FREE to patients and health care workers. To receive a copy call AAKP at 1-800-749-2257. The brochure can also be downloaded from the AAKP Web site [www.aakp.org/brochures/iron-story](http://www.aakp.org/brochures/iron-story). A Spanish version of The Iron Story can also be downloaded from the AAKP Web site. The brochure is made possible by an educational grant from Fresenius Medical Care North America.





## ProjectCROWNWeb.org: Training and Communications Resources

The Project CROWNWeb site features a variety of training and communications materials that allows you to stay on top of the CROWNWeb implementation process, and the system access requirements.

Materials on [www.ProjectCROWNWeb.org](http://www.ProjectCROWNWeb.org) include, but are not limited to:

### 1. CROWNWeb Training & Self-Paced Online Courses

- **Simulations:** Interact with CROWNWeb simulations that look and feel like the real system.
- **Reference Library:** Access quick step-by-step instructions regarding CROWNWeb, QIPS, and the CROWNWeb Learning Management System (LMS).
- **CROWNWeb LMS:** Access over 25 self-paced courses that cover the tasks and requirements of a CROWNWeb Facility Viewer, Facility Editor, and CROWNWeb Facility Administrator.
- **Training Registration:** Sign up for upcoming training, and download the latest training files.

### 2. CROWNWeb Community WebEx Sessions

**Six-Part CROWNWeb WebEx Series:** Register for CROWNWeb-related community discussions on topics such as the status of the CROWNWeb implementation process, the latest on the Batch Data Submission process, and how facilities are using the CROWNWeb system in the REAL WORLD. (January 28, 2010 – June 24, 2010.)

Some of the CROWNWeb-related community WebEx sessions include:

- **January 28, 2010:** An Independent Facility Perspective: Larry Emerson, President, NRAA
- **February 25, 2010:** CROWNWeb Batch Submission Process
- **March 25, 2010:** Clinical Performance Measures

Register for the six-part CROWNWeb WebEx Series by clicking on the [Presentations](#) link.

Visit [www.ProjectCROWNWeb.org](http://www.ProjectCROWNWeb.org) for a complete list of available training and communications materials.



### Updates for Patient Care Technicians:

The deadline for patient care technicians (PCT's) to achieve national or equivalent certification (April 15, 2010) is rapidly approaching. The deadline for applications to take certification exams vary depending on the test used. A summary of the situation as we understand it is provided in the chart below.

\* State approved PCT Certification Programs are available for other sites in the country through the CMS website

| Test Organizations  | Websites                       | Application Lead-Time  | Latest Test Date Available |
|---|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC) CCHT exam      | nccc-exam.org                  | 10 week application time<br>Paper & Pencil Tests<br>Computer Based Tests   | 5 sites in April           |
| Board of Nephrology Examiners for Nursing and Technology (BONENT) | www.bonent.org                 | 4 week application time for computer based tests (CBT)<br>45-day application time for Paper & Pencil exams (PPE) | 6 sites in April           |
| National Nephrology Certification Organization (NNCO)             | www.ptcny.com/<br>clients/nnco | Minimum 1 month application time<br>See website for test sites   | sites in April             |

We are hearing a great deal of angst about PCT's with years of experience in dialysis not passing the certification exams. With time closing quickly, nurses and PCTs are looking for study materials to help them. Unfortunately, they are turning to sham organizations that do not know a thing about chronic kidney disease, dialysis, nor the role of patient care technicians. Caution should be exercised! There are study materials currently available and developed by credible nephrology experts. For example, the Amgen Core Curriculum for Dialysis Technicians and the NANT study guide.

NCS has developed a comprehensive review course that is accessible online in an interactive format with practice quizzes and final test. The program remembers where the student left off, allowing easy return. Chapters may be accessed repeatedly for review. When the student enters a wrong answer on the quizzes and final test, they are highlighted with the correct answer, rationale and reference. Please advise your colleagues to use only credible review programs and materials for greater success.

To register go to <https://www.commlabuniversity.com/asdhealthcare/>



## Purpose

- Assist the Nurse or Patient Care Technician to prepare for a certification examination
- Augment the training program for nurses or technicians new to dialysis
- Provide continuing education for nurses and technicians

## Course Content

*Patricia B. McCarley, MSN, ACNPc, CNN Director, Education Programs*

- Kidney Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathophysiology
- Principles of Dialysis
- Patient Evaluation and Monitoring
- Hemodialysis Vascular Access
- Dialysis Treatment – Equipment Monitoring
- Water Treatment and Dialyzer Reuse
- Patient Education
- Patient Safety, Documentation, Infection Control, Emergency, and Preparedness

## How to Register

- **Course website:** [www.commlabuniversity.com/asdhealthcare](http://www.commlabuniversity.com/asdhealthcare)
- **Cost:** US \$100.00
- **Contact Hours:** Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number 14961, for 10.3 contact hours.

## For more information

Contact NCS at **630-505-0053** or [www.nephrologyclinicalolutions.com](http://www.nephrologyclinicalolutions.com)



## WHO YA GONNA CALL?

Here at Network 14 we have always said, “call us if you have a question, we’re here for you!”. Like most of you though, we must do for more providers, facilities and patients with little increase in resources. Did you know that we have over 470 dialysis and renal transplant facilities and over 45,000 patients in Texas now? Just like you, we’re having trouble keeping up.

Because of this, over the past few years we have made some changes to help with communication between the Network staff and the renal community.

The first change was to develop and produce a monthly newsletter (NetLink) with a calendar containing important due dates of deliverables. The monthly NetLink is faxed during the last week of each month with instructions to post for all facility staff to read. In some cases, we ask that you share the information with your patients. There is an evaluation of the Netlink that allows staff to provide feedback on the information, content and resources provided. If you have any comments or would like see specific information published in the NetLink please contact Geli Brown at [gbrown@nw14.esrd.net](mailto:gbrown@nw14.esrd.net).

The second change was to go to an automatic phone answering system. Many of you in the community are unaware that there is only 11 full time and 2 part time staff members to assist a customer base of over 65,000 people. In order to assist the community the best way possible, we felt there was no other option. Network staff names, job descriptions, phone numbers and email addresses have been posted on our website or you may request an electronic copy by emailing Debbie O’Daniel at [info@nw14.esrd.net](mailto:info@nw14.esrd.net). We feel this system helps to reduce call back time to you (the community) that needs our assistance.

Frequently, we receive calls that involve internal policies & procedures, incident reporting, personnel matters and corporate issues that we can’t and shouldn’t answer. If your question or concern falls in this category please contact your corporation for assistance.



## QI Corner Updates:

### Network # 14 Vascular Access Quality Improvement Projects

Every Texas facility is participating in one of the five Vascular Access projects currently on-going:

- ▶ Call to Action – The 11 Texas HD Facilities with the lowest AVF rates in the state.
- ▶ Metro Mentoring Project – 37 HD facilities located in large, metropolitan areas with prevalent AVF rates < 40% will be participating in on-site mentoring sessions with peer benchmark facilities.
- ▶ Success in the City – 120 HD facilities located in large, metropolitan areas (prevalent AVF rates 40.1%-60%) will be participating in a Medical Director Mentoring Webinar with benchmark facility Medical Directors.

U Can Make a Difference – 34 HD facilities affiliated with a national dialysis corporation will be participating in Barriers Assessment, benchmark facility mentoring and QIPs addressing primary internal barriers.

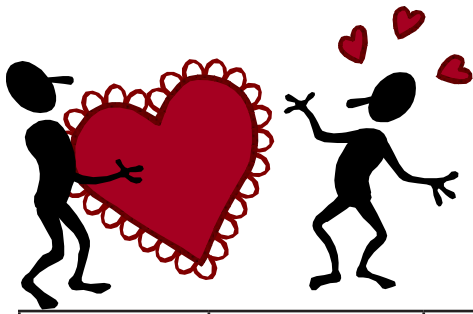
Every Patient Counts! – ~ 250 Texas HD facilities not enrolled in one of the other three QIPs.

A very special thank you goes out to the Network 14 facilities for their participation in these vascular access projects!

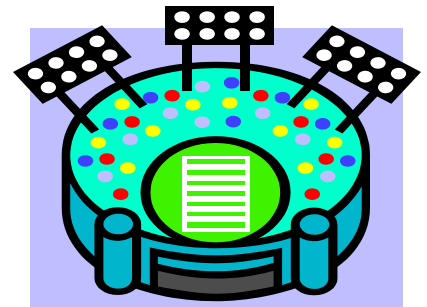
### Quality of Care Data Deadline For Non-Large Dialysis Organizations (LDOs)

Friday, January 22, 2010 was the deadline for 2009 Quality of Care Data Submission! If your facility received a notification in November 2009 that data submission was required and you have not submitted it to the Network, please be sure to submit it expeditiously. For more information please call Jennie Conley at 469-916-3805.





# Network 14 February 2010 Community Calendar



| Sun   | Mon   | Tue | Wed  | Thu | Fri                           | Sat |
|---|---|-----|--|-----|-------------------------------|-----|
|   |   |     |  |     |                               |     |
|   | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5<br>2744 Report<br>Mailed    | 6   |
| 7   | 8<br>EMSystem<br>update due<br><br>January<br>PAR's due | 9   | 10<br><br>Non-LDO<br>January<br>FF data due | 11  | 12                            | 13  |
| 14<br><br>Happy<br>Valentine's Day | 15  | 16  | 17<br>Missing Forms<br>Due<br><br>2744 Report<br>Due   | 18  | 19                            | 20  |
| 21  | 22  | 23  | 24   | 25  | 26<br>Missing Forms<br>Mailed | 27  |
| 28  |   |     |  |     |                               |     |

Please double-check that your facility provider number is included in the top right-hand corner of **ALL** pages of your PAR prior to submitting to the Network.