



Understanding Kidney Disease in America

About Kidney Disease:

Each year in the United States, more than 100,000 Americans are diagnosed with kidney failure (or End Stage Renal Disease) – an irreversible condition which is fatal without a kidney transplant or lifesaving dialysis treatments. Currently, more than 400,000 Americans suffer from ESRD and that number is expected to double over the next decade.

The dramatic rise in kidney failure is attributable to the increase of diabetes and hypertension, two skyrocketing chronic diseases and the leading risk factors for ESRD. Furthermore, an additional 20 million Americans – or 1 in 9 adults – suffer from Chronic Kidney Disease, which untreated, can ultimately progress to kidney failure.

Because transplantation options are extremely limited, most patients who suffer from ESRD, depend on lifesaving dialysis treatments to survive. Ensuring quality dialysis care remains available is essential to the nation’s patient population, as is providing prevention and education resources so that patients can become empowered to avoid ESRD altogether.

About Patients:

- The most at-risk groups for developing kidney failure include African Americans, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, seniors (those 65 and older), and anyone with a family history of CKD.
- African Americans make up 12 percent of the general population but account for 30 percent of people with kidney failure.
- Six percent of Americans have diabetes and 25 percent of Americans have high blood pressure – the two leading causes of kidney failure.
- More than 62,000 U.S. patients are currently waiting for a kidney transplant.

About Treating Kidney Failure and Medicare:

The renal community is dedicated to providing education and prevention resources to at-risk patients to help slow the rise of kidney failure. For those who will progress to requiring dialysis treatments, providers are committed to ensuring the availability of quality care.

Last year, Congress enacted with the strong support of the kidney community, the “Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act” (MIPPA), which includes provisions critical to improving care for patients with kidney disease and kidney failure, including public and patient education initiatives to increase awareness about CKD; revisions to the Medicare ESRD Program to improve coverage; and the establishment of a quality improvement initiative to help ensure patients continue to have access to quality kidney care.

The kidney community is committed to ensuring the implementation of these reforms and working with Congress on patient-centric and prevention-focused health care reform.