

## **Fistula First ESRD Network Activities February 2005**

### Overview:

As part of the ESRD Network Scope of Work beginning July 2003, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the ESRD Networks, and key provider representatives jointly implemented the National Vascular Access Improvement Initiative. The initiative is now known as “Fistula First.” The principal goal of this initiative is to increase the appropriate use of AV fistulae for hemodialysis access, reaching or exceeding the K/DOQI clinical practice guidelines. The [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#) is assisting the ESRD Networks, CMS, and dialysis stakeholders to develop an approach to improving the coordination of care across providers, and to spreading best practices.

In April 2004 a [CMS press release](#) announce the launch of Fistula First. Each of the 18 ESRD Networks are currently conducting specific quality improvement activities to implement the recommendations in the [Fistula First Change Package](#).

To learn more about what each ESRD Network is doing, go to <http://www.esrdnetworks.org/> and click on the Fistula First logo or click on the US map for the particular Network or region of interest.