



# MLN Matters®



Information for Medicare Fee-For-Service Health Care Professionals

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## *Announcing the New Booklet: Physician's Guide to Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis and Kidney Transplant Services*

**Note:** This article was updated on February 26, 2013, to reflect current Web addresses. All other information remains unchanged.

### Provider Types Affected

Physicians who have dialysis patients

### Provider Action Needed



#### **STOP – Impact to You**

If you are a physician who has patients with permanent kidney failure, the new *Physician's Guide to Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis and Kidney Transplant Services* is for you.



#### **CAUTION – What You Need to Know**

The new *Physician's Guide to Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis and Kidney Transplant Services* will tell you:

- How your patients can get Medicare if their kidneys fail;
- How Medicare helps to pay for kidney dialysis and kidney transplants; and
- Where to get additional help and information.



#### **GO – What You Need to Do**

See the *Background* section of this article to find out further details regarding this important new Medicare booklet for physicians.

#### Disclaimer

This article was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This article may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents.

## Background

The new *Physician's Guide to Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis and Kidney Transplant Services* explains how Medicare helps pay for kidney dialysis and kidney transplant services in the *Original Medicare Plan*, also known as "fee-for-service." If your patients are in a *Medicare Advantage Plan* (the new name for Medicare + Choice), which includes *Medicare Managed Care Plans*, *Medicare Private Fee-for-Service Plans*, and *Medicare Preferred Provider Organization Plans*, their plan must give them at least the same coverage as the *Original Medicare Plan*, but it may have different rules.

The costs, rights, protections, and/or choices of where your patients get their care may be different if they are in one of these plans, and should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A similar booklet has been made available to patients, but this booklet is written for you, their physician. It contains detailed information about relevant kidney-related Medicare information, including:

- Medicare Basics for People with Kidney Failure
- Coverage
- Impact of Provisions in the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA)
- Dialysis treatment Options
- Kidney Transplants
- Medicare Payment for Blood
- Impact of Other Kinds of Health Insurance
- Helpful Coverage Charts
- Key Definitions and other information.

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