

## **Transforming Kidney Care: The ESRD Network Program's Path to Better Outcomes**

The End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network Program is revolutionizing kidney care through four key priorities — Empower Patient & Family Choice, Improve Care Coordination, Promote Whole Health, and Enhance Data Interoperability — each driving measurable progress toward nine critical outcome goals.

### **Empower Patient & Family Choice**

Kidney transplantation and home dialysis offer ESRD patients' better outcomes and greater quality of life. The program is committed to ensuring every eligible patient is offered a transplant referral and that home dialysis-eligible patients are supported in starting or switching to home-based treatment. Through unbiased education, shared decision-making, and alignment with the Advancing American Kidney Health (AAKH) initiative, patients and families are empowered to choose the treatment path that best fits their lives.

### **Improve Care Coordination**

Fragmented care leads to preventable crises. The program is working to decrease ED visits and hospitalizations (measured per 100 patient-months) by strengthening communication across dialysis facilities, hospitals, and primary care providers; implementing proactive monitoring protocols; and leveraging real-time data through EQRS and CROWNWeb. The ESRD Quality Incentive Program (ESRD QIP) reinforces accountability by linking performance on these measures to facility payment.

### **Promote Whole Health**

ESRD care must address the whole person. The program targets three preventive health goals:

- **Depression Screening:** Routine screenings for all eligible patients, with documented follow-up plans when results are positive — addressing a condition two to three times more prevalent in ESRD patients than the general population.
- **Pneumococcal Vaccination:** Ensuring eligible patients receive this critical vaccine, protecting against life-threatening infections.
- **Influenza Vaccination:** Annual flu vaccination campaigns embedded into routine dialysis care to protect this high-risk population.

### **The Foundation: Data Interoperability**

Seamless data exchange across the care continuum powers every priority — enabling earlier interventions, eliminating redundant testing, and ensuring quality improvement efforts are driven by real-time, actionable data.

Together, these four priorities and nine outcome goals reflect a unified commitment: every ESRD patient deserves care that is coordinated, compassionate, and centered on their individual needs.