

## **Patient Voices Take Center Stage in Revolutionary End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network Program**

### *CMS Launches Unprecedented ESRD Patient Engagement Initiative to Transform Kidney Care*

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is putting kidney patients at the helm of healthcare transformation with a groundbreaking patient engagement strategy that ensures every voice is heard, valued, and acted upon. CMS believes that authentic engagement with beneficiaries is essential for accurately representing patient interests and incorporating their insights into future healthcare programs and kidney care planning initiatives.

The program establishes a collaborative platform bringing together kidney patients, their families, caregivers, and End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) interested parties to share ideas and experiences. This creates a unified voice driving patient-centered improvements across the entire ESRD care ecosystem. It includes providing collaborative opportunities for ESRD patients and families to engage directly with CMS and contribute to quality improvement in kidney care, developing recommendations for sharing patient ideas and self-improvement resources throughout the kidney patient community, and tapping into the knowledge of ESRD patients, families, and caregivers from high-performing dialysis centers to advocate and advise on improving health and wellbeing nationally.

The 18 ESRD Networks will activate patient subject matter experts with ESRD to mentor and advise dialysis facilities needing support, creating a peer-to-peer learning environment that elevates care quality across the board. The ESRD Networks will also manage their robust grievance management system that ensures every ESRD patient concern receives prompt attention and resolution, with Networks providing technical assistance to facilities for effective grievance handling and comprehensive trend analysis.

For the millions of Americans living with kidney disease, this initiative represents a fundamental shift—from patients as passive recipients of care to active partners in shaping the future of kidney healthcare.

To learn more about what is happening in your state around *Patient Engagement*, visit [CMS.gov](https://www.cms.gov) and contact an ESRD Network near you.