

Tip Sheet: Strategies for Educating Patients on Home Dialysis

The CMS Learning System for the Comprehensive End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Care (CEC) Model hosted action groups to support ESRD Seamless Care Organizations (ESCOs) in identifying, implementing, and testing strategies for improving the delivery of home dialysis. The Learning System also developed a case study describing elements of Fresenius Kidney Care's home dialysis program. During these activities, ESCOs noted that structured, targeted education for patients about home dialysis encourages them to use this treatment option. For more information on the CEC model, please click [here](#).

This tip sheet highlights four strategies for enhancing education on home dialysis and for expanding the use of home dialysis based on insights shared during the action groups and the case study development process.



Identify staff who have trusting relationships with in-center patients to serve as home dialysis educators.

These staff are likely to have more effective discussions with patients about their treatment because patients will feel more comfortable candidly discussing home dialysis as an option with people they trust. For example, in-center nurses and nephrologists have often established relationships with patients through frequent one-on-one interactions and may be well-positioned to educate patients about home dialysis.

One ESCO established the formal role of a "kidney care advocate" to encourage in-center staff not only to educate their patients on the benefits of home dialysis but also to support them in navigating their treatment options.



Train staff to discuss the benefits of home dialysis with in-center patients.

Training members of the integrated care team—including dialysis technicians, in-center nurses, nephrologists, and social workers—on the benefits of home dialysis and on the transition process can make them more comfortable with educating patients.

Some ESCOs provide staff with "lunch and learn" sessions conducted by home dialysis nurses and seminars led by guest experts to describe the benefits of home dialysis and to answer the staff's questions.



Develop accessible learning activities on home dialysis for in-center patients.

Scheduling interactive learning activities at times and locations that are convenient for patients can increase their awareness of home dialysis and their knowledge of the transition process from in-center to home dialysis.

One ESCO hosts "lobby days" in which home dialysis staff visit in-center units to educate patients on home dialysis while another ESCO facilitates peer-to-peer support groups to connect patients who are considering home dialysis with patients who are receiving dialysis at home.



Target education to specific patient populations who are likely to consider transitioning from in-center treatment to home dialysis.

Educating patients about home dialysis at times when they are likely to transition successfully from in-center to home dialysis is an efficient use of ESCO funds.

Some ESCOs target home dialysis education to patients with late-stage chronic kidney disease and to new-start in-center patients, as both of these populations have little to no experience with in-center treatment and may be more likely to switch to home dialysis than patients who have more experience with in-center treatment. Other ESCOs focus on patients with substantial in-center treatment experience who have recently been hospitalized because of an access-related complication, as they may be open to considering treatment at home given their recent hospital stay.