

Network Notes

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Insert:

Patient Page

Please photocopy the Patient Page insert for all your patients, or download it from the Network website.

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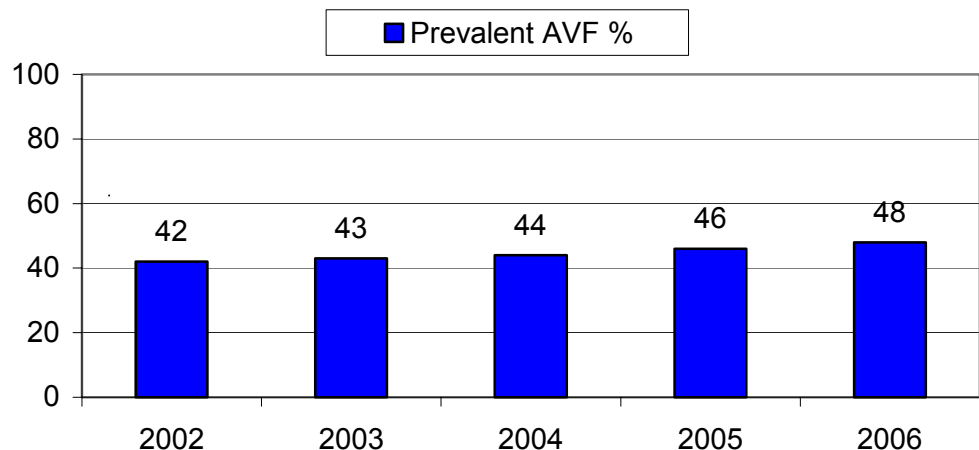
ESRD Network of New England Fistula First Update

As you are aware the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the 18 Networks are part of a nationwide break-through initiative to increase prevalent AV fistulas in the hemodialysis patient population. Patients with an AVF have better outcomes. The morbidity & mortality

nephrologists, dialysis staff and the vascular surgeons throughout New England the prevalent AVF rate has increased to 48.7%. This is a most commendable improvement. The Network's Medical Review Board is very concerned about the 33 providers that have reported less than a

management. The new 2006 a K/DOQI guideline for vascular access continues to recommend a goal of at least 40% for the prevalent AV fistula rate. The last complete data set available for each state is from May 2006. Nearly every state has improved their prevalent AVF

**Percent Prevalent AVF
2002 - 2006**



associated with indwelling catheters and AV grafts is much higher than the AVF. Each provider in the Network has been submitting their vascular data for their clinic for the past three years. Due to the concerted efforts of the

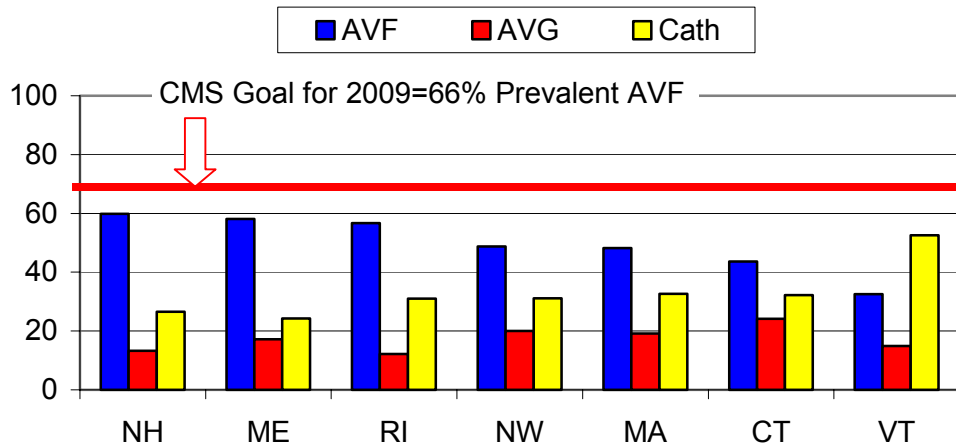
40% prevalent AVF rate. There are proven strategies that have worked throughout the country. Visit the national web site at: www.fistulafirst.org for resources and call the Network for assistance in quality improvement in vascular

rate and decreased the AV grafts and indwelling catheters. Overall 30% of prevalent patients continue to have a catheter as their vascular access.

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**Prevalent Vascular Access by State & Network
May 2006**



The Network’s Medical Review Board has set a goal to reduce the prevalent catheter rate by 3% each year. There has been a slight improvement in the incident catheter rate as well as the incident AVF rate. Since the prevalent rate is driven by the incident rate it would be wonderful to see this trend continue.

IMMUNIZATIONS – Never More Important!

Be aware that it is once again time to think about immunizations - for patients and staff! Now is a great time to speak to everyone in your clinic about immunizations; before the flu season begins.

For Medicare patients the costs of influenza and pneumococcal vaccine are covered when administered by

certified providers. All dialysis clinics with a Medicare provider number are Medicare certified. Medicare beneficiary co-insurance or co-payment applies and the beneficiary does not have to meet his or her deductible to receive either vaccine. The co-insurance & yearly deductible does apply for Hepatitis B vaccination however. A 2004 Medicare survey indicated a 73% influenza vaccination rate for facility and community-dwelling Medicare beneficiaries and a 67% pneumococcal vaccination rate for the same population. Of great concern; that same survey reported that dialysis patients were under-immunized.

Maintaining high immunization rates for dialysis patients and staff will not only protect individuals in the clinic but also the community in general.

An average of 36,000 Americans die from influenza or its complications each year. The National Center for Health Statistics reported influenza and pneumonia are the primary causes of death for more than 57,000 older adults in 2003. For all persons 65 or older, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and other leading authorities recommended lifetime vaccination against pneumococcal disease and annual vaccination against influenza. This advisory applies to all ESRD

patients with no age limitation as they are an at risk group for influenza & pneumonia. The dialysis staff should also receive the influenza vaccine since they are in close contact with susceptible patients.

CMS has developed a variety of educational products and resources to help healthcare professionals and their staff become familiar with coding & reimbursement. For products to share with your patients visit www.medicare.gov on the Web. To learn about the latest advisory on seasonal flu visit the CDC site: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>

Adapted from Provider Communications Group, CMS, August 2006



ESRD Network Contracts Awarded

The Centers For Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) awards funding contracts to many non-profit agencies to deliver program services. On July 1, 2006 CMS awarded the Network of New England another 3-year contract to continue services to Medicare beneficiaries and Medicare certified providers in the six New England states. During this contract cycle two of the 18 existing Networks will be administered by Quality Improvement Organizations that competed for and successfully won the ESRD Network contracts. Each ESRD

Network is required under these CMS contracts to deliver specified services and undertake projects designed to improve quality of care for ESRD patients. In this mission we will be asking for your partnership in various ways.

For the **Clinical Performance Measures** (CPMs) project the Network will ask you to report patient lab data to evaluate anemia management, catheter usage, stenosis monitoring and adequacy of dialysis. For the **Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative** project we will

be asking for your help in increasing the number of fistulae used by patients and to decrease the number of catheters used for blood access. Without your help and cooperation these quality improvement efforts will not be successful.

We thank you for your help over the past 30 years and look forward to working with the highly respected New England renal community during the next three years under our new CMS contract. We couldn't do it without you!

New England – Get Prepared for Major Disasters

We must prepare better for emergencies and disasters in the renal community. The 2005 hurricane season and 9/11 were hard lessons in how unprepared we have been. More than fifty dialysis patients

died in the days following Katrina's strike on the Gulf Coast, in part due to multi-system failure. Your Network will be working on the problem in the coming months by seeking information about your

local plans. You can get started right now by posting this abbreviated Emergency Website List in the staff break room and patient waiting area.

<http://www.72hours.org/>
<http://www.msema.org/naturalhaz/natmain.htm>
http://www.ready.gov/america/natural_disasters.html
<http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>
<http://www.redcross.org/>
<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/6206.html>
<http://www.avma.org/disaster> (pets and animals)

Save This Date

**October 12, 2006
7:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Sturbridge, MA**

18th Annual Network of New England Education Meeting

We are planning and preparing for our best event ever, and hope you have your calendars marked to join us.

The meeting will be held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center located on picturesque Cedar Lake in Sturbridge, MA.

This venue has a large hall for displaying posters and exhibits in one area where participants will also be able to enjoy refreshments.

In addition to the 12,000 square foot Exhibit Hall for the educational sessions, lunch will be served in the Grand Ballroom. There is adequate parking for all attendees, and we have a range of hotels in the area to fit your budget.

Registration brochures were mailed in July, so please plan your time and registration fees now.

If you need more information about the meeting, visit our website or contact the Network.

The 2005 Network Annual Report is available on the Network website!

The report contains clinical profile data, ESRD population statistics, and provider census information.

Network Notes

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Danielle R. Daley...Designer

DFC Posters Coming In The Mail!

All dialysis providers in the United States will receive a new poster developed by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) about the Dialysis Facility Compare website. The poster is a large size attractively designed and colored item for staff to place in the patient waiting area of their outpatient dialysis facilities. CMS has called upon the 18 ESRD Networks across the country to distribute the posters. Network of New England has sent posters to

approximately 160 dialysis clinics in CT, MA, ME, NH, RI and VT. The posters will arrive by US Mail to the attention of each facility Social Worker.

The Dialysis Facility Compare website can be found at the Medicare.gov website. The address is www.medicare.gov/dialysis. The site contains information and answers questions about all dialysis clinics in the United States Medicare system. The site gives information to help patients interested



in travel select dialysis services near their destinations. DFC also has information about the quality of care delivered at all clinics. If you don't already have your poster, look for it in the mail! Please make sure your poster is prominently displayed in your facility.

End Stage Renal Disease Network of New England

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