



Washington, D.C.

May 8, 2007

**DIALYSIS CENTERS SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE
MEDICARE ESRD PAYMENT REFORM**

The Kidney Care Council (KCC) is a trade association of eleven renal care companies including large, small, nonprofit and for-profit companies that collectively provide End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) services to nearly 80 percent of the country's dialysis patients.

The members of the KCC are dedicated to ensuring high quality patient care. We recognize that Congress, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) have spent considerable time examining the ESRD payment system in an effort to improve efficiency and assure high quality care in a fiscally responsible manner. In that regard, the KCC looks forward to working with Congress in support of comprehensive reform of the Medicare ESRD payment policy.

A number of proposals for reform have been discussed including broadening the current ESRD composite rate – the “payment bundle” – as well as drug reimbursement reform. Through such reform, our objectives are to preserve patient access to high quality care and remove any perception that financial considerations impact the delivery of dialysis care.

Any reform methodology should establish an annual reimbursement update mechanism that incorporates quality achievement and improvement. It should be noted that payment for dialysis services is the only prospective payment system in the Medicare program that does not receive an annual inflation adjustment. As a result, comprehensive and balanced reform is needed to ensure that Medicare reimbursement keeps pace with treatment costs while preserving patient access to high quality care.

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For further information, please contact Rob Foreman, President of The Kidney Care Council at: 202-756-3031.

The Kidney Care Council (KCC) is a nonprofit Washington-based health care trade association of eleven renal care companies that collectively provide End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) services to nearly 80 percent of the dialysis patients in the United States. The membership includes large, small, nonprofit and for-profit provider companies. The KCC's mission is to improve patient care through demonstrable improvements in patient outcomes, patient safety, and quality of life measures. The KCC is dedicated to improving quality as well as promoting education so that newly diagnosed patients fully understand this disease and how to slow its progression and reduce complications.