

Why Patients Support the Kidney Care Quality and Education Act (KCQEA)

The key to battling any disease is understanding what causes it, what can be done to fight it, and what is needed to treat it. Americans of all walks of life need this bill, so they can learn to avoid irreversible kidney failure. For those of us who are already undergoing dialysis, the KCQEA will provide much needed education about kidney disease. The legislation would also help support current dialysis patients' access to quality and uninterrupted care.

It's time for a change. Consider the following:

- 26 million Americans suffer from chronic kidney disease (commonly the result of high blood pressure or diabetes), which left untreated can progress to kidney failure—or what we call “End Stage Renal Disease” (ESRD).
- More than 485,000 Americans with ESRD must rely on quality dialysis services, or receive a transplant, to live.
- KCQEA provides resources toward kidney disease education and awareness in an effort to address the rising tide of kidney failure in America and ensure that all patients have access to the quality care they need.

Knowledge is Power.

What we don't know can hurt us when it comes to kidney disease. This bill will create public and patient education initiatives centered upon:

- Increasing awareness about chronic kidney disease (CKD) and helping patients learn self-management skills in order to avoid kidney failure.
- Understanding the treatment options available to us—including in-center dialysis and home dialysis—and having the ability to choose which works best for the individual.
- Why home dialysis isn't more widely chosen. KCQEA will also provide for a study on the impediments to home dialysis so that those of us who want it can have easier access.

Reimbursement Reform is Important for Patient Care

The reimbursement rate is not automatically updated each year to keep up with inflation and changes in treatment and technology. It is a fact that people who provide dialysis care actually lose money on each dialysis treatment paid for by Medicare.

For patients, updated reimbursement means:

- Access to dialysis centers, in both rural and urban areas, that are close to home and convenient, and that can afford to provide the best quality care and the latest technology.
- Recruitment and retention of highly trained care teams—nurses, technicians, dietitians, and social workers—by our dialysis providers to ensure that we have the best team working with us and for us.
- An annual update for care and rewards for those providers that give the best quality care.

By passing the KCQEA, current and future dialysis patients will have access to the best quality care, allowing us to remain healthier and live active, productive lives. While it's too late to prevent us from needing dialysis, it is not too late for the millions of Americans who suffer (or are at risk for) CKD.