



Protected patient access by successfully opposing S.B. 1156 and Proposition 8 in California.

Passage of these initiatives would have shuttered dialysis facilities, with patients scrambling to find treatment. Governor Brown agreed with our concerns and vetoed S.B. 1156, while over 60% of California voters joined us in opposition to Proposition 8.



Helped to prevent proposed cuts to vascular access centers (VAC). The Administration initially proposed reimbursement cuts to vascular access centers by up to 62%. Ultimately, they chose to delay that decision, as many patients choose to have access services performed at a VAC, and these proposed cuts potentially threaten that choice.



Worked with the Administration to prevent multiple self-insured plans from violating Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) protections. Federal law requires private insurers to cover end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients for at least 30 months, with Medicare serving as the secondary payer. With multiple insurers trying to coerce patients into Medicare, DPC filed a complaint with the Administration, resulting in letters being sent to more than 20 self-insured plans urging compliance with the MSP law.



Helped secure passage of legislation that advances telehealth for dialysis patients and allows for the accreditation of new dialysis facilities. The CHRONIC Care Act was signed into law on February 9, 2018 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. This law enables providers to bill for services that are provided to dialysis patients via telemedicine, increasing dialysis patient access to doctors and other health professionals especially in remote and underserved areas. It also allows new dialysis facilities to secure accreditation to start serving patients, instead of awaiting months for an inspection by a state or federal health agency.



Secured victories on charitable assistance for COBRA premium payments from the Department of Labor and from CMS on Medicare Advantage premiums. Nearly one in four of DPC's members rely on financial assistance to help pay for their monthly insurance premiums. Prior to 2018, insurers had never gone as far as to drop dialysis patients who needed help with their Medicare Advantage or COBRA premiums. In response to complaints filed by DPC, the Administration required these insurers to reverse their policies and cover these patients in need.



Recruited over 175 Members of Congress in support of legislation protecting access to charitable assistance for ESRD patients. With insurers continuing to look for new ways to maximize their profits by dropping sick patients, their latest efforts have focused on trying to prohibit patients from getting help with paying for their insurance premiums. Senator-Elect Kevin Cramer (R-ND) championed legislation to protect patient access to charitable assistance, continuing to add cosponsors with strong grassroots patient support.



Supported efforts to protect living donors. With transplant remaining the optimal therapy for many dialysis patients, DPC continued its efforts to increase patient access. In 2018 the Department of Labor issued regulations extending the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to living donors, helping to ensure that people can take time off from work to donate a kidney without having to worry about their job security.



Helped secure over 200 Congressional cosponsors on legislation to expand care coordination. Our health care system focuses on paying for the delivery of care, instead of paying health professionals to keep patients healthy. The Dialysis PATIENTS Demonstration Act seeks to try alternate models of care to improve patient outcomes, now with 199 cosponsors in the House and 10 in the Senate.



Generated more than 83,000 constituent emails to state and federal policy makers. Our on-line advocacy tools made it easy for patients to send emails to their representatives about protecting patients' access to care, increasing access to care coordination, and ensuring access to Medigap.



Increased our grassroots advocacy network to more than 120,000 individuals. We utilized various new online and social media platforms in 2018 to more than double the number of individuals who are now active and involved with DPC.



BONUS: Hosted another successful patient advocacy day on Capitol Hill. For our annual fly-in this year we received over 150 applications. Ultimately, DPC sent 70 patients and health care professionals from 40 states to Capitol Hill to meet with 139 Members of Congress and/or their staff.