

The mission of the Forum is to support and advocate on behalf of the ESRD Networks in promoting methods to improve the quality of care to patients with renal disease.

Forum Matters

Advocacy Products/Services: QI Products/Services: Education

Priority Issues

The Forum Board of Directors met on January 8 -10, 2010.

Key accomplishments since the October Forum Board Meeting include submission of Comments on the ESRD Network Redesign (submitted to CMS on December 11, 2009) and comments on the Medicare Program Proposed Rule: End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System (submitted December 15). The Forum would like to recognize Klemens Meyer, MD, and Cindy Kristensen, MD, for their outstanding leadership on these documents.

Priority areas of support were discussed and next steps identified.

Area of support to the Networks	Next Steps
Public Reporting	The Forum sent a Priority Communiqué to CMS regarding recent directives to ESRD Networks related to website display of provider-level statistics and instructions to complete security incident reports, directives which may be in conflict with Network contract agreements.
Network Redesign	The Forum Board will prepare executive summaries of specific portions of the Redesign document submitted to CMS in December. These summaries will be supported by evidence-based data as appropriate, and will include recommendations for action. The Forum will pursue a definition of patient-centeredness and articulate recommendations for implementation.
AVF goal	The Forum Board is developing a white paper addressing the feasibility of Network success in achieving the FFBI AVF targets. This white paper will be submitted to CMS within two weeks, and then shared with renal community partners.
CROWNWeb	The Forum will articulate in a letter to CMS its interest in helping CMS be successful with the rollout of CROWNWeb. To articulate its position, the Forum will pursue a dialogue with industry partners to identify common perceptions, concerns, and recommendations.
Collaboration with LDOs	The Forum leadership has renewed its dialogue with LDO leadership and will work to foster an ongoing relationship with common issues including patient complaints/grievances, QI work at the local level, and working with facility medical directors.

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Spotlight: Medical Advisory Council (MAC)

Under the leadership of Chair Stuart Goldstein, MD, the Forum Medical Advisory Council (MAC) has developed resource toolkits on four key topics: medication reconciliation, vaccination, diabetes management, and catheter reduction. All four toolkits were designed so that they can be adapted according to a facility's particular needs and challenges in meeting the requirements of the Conditions for Coverage.

The toolkits were made available to the general public via the [Forum website](#) in early August 2009. One Network reported that downloads from their Network site soared to over 100 after the toolkits were promoted by Network staff.

Upcoming work for the MAC will include devising guidelines to define poor performance and identify poor performing facilities, with defined cut points for measuring success. The MAC, in collaboration with the Forum and EDAC leadership, will also pursue hosting a conference for the renal community to discuss issues related to poor performance.

Call for Volunteers

- Opportunities to participate in the work of the following are available in the following areas:
 - Business Development and Audit Subcommittees
 - Nominating Committee for Forum Board of Directors' positions
 - Committee to advance a "Poor Performers" conference
 - Committee to develop and secure funding for Network educational opportunities

Forum Representatives in the Renal Community

- Dr. Goldman: Forum representative to KCQA.
- Dr. Jackson: Forum representative to the National Quality Forum (NQF).
- Dr. Meyer: Forum representative to the USRDS External Advisory Committee.
- Drs. Garrett, Latos, and Goldman: National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) Coordinating Council.
- Ms. Carlson and Ms. Kitsen: Forum representatives to UNOS/OPTN.
- Dr. Goldman and Ms. Mayo: Board of the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP).