

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

## Special Edition

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## Since the last issue:

The **2017 Elections** were complete in June and the Forum is pleased to welcome Natasha Avery and Dr. Kam Kalantar-Zadeh as member-at-large to the Board. Stephanie Hutchinson was elected to a second term at Treasurer and Dr. Ralph Atkinson was elected to the President-Elect position.

Members of the Forum's Board of Directors met in Washington D.C. in August for the Summer Board Meeting. A 1-page bulleted summary, minutes, and the President's Message slide set are available at the [Forum Office](#). Some highlights from the meeting include:

- Recognition of past Board member Dr. Joe Lee and retiring Network Executive Directors Nancy Armistead and Glenda Harbert.

***The Forum wishes to acknowledge Ms. Armistead and Ms. Harbert for their many years of dedicated service to the Forum Board of Directors and the ESRD Network Program. We extend our warm congratulations on your retirement. Thank you!***

- A motion was passed to join the CDC "Making Dialysis Safer" Coalition as a Partner Member.
- The EDAC, MAC and KPAC presented an update on their council's activities. Slide decks of these presentations are available at the Forum Office.
- A motion was passed to increase the annual membership dues from \$2000.00/year to \$2500.00/yr.
- A membership survey will be developed to assess how the various Forum tools and resources are being used. The survey is expected to be available in November.
- 2018 Board Meetings dates were identified: March 2-4 in Tampa, FL and August 24-25 in Chicago, IL.

The **MAC Annual Meeting** was convened in New Orleans on November 1st immediately prior to the ASN Kidney Week conference. One action item from the meeting, was the drafting and submission of a letter to the Medicare Administrative Contractors in opposition to the recently proposed LCD Frequency of Hemodialysis guidelines.

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The Forum submitted to CMS formal comments on the proposed changes to the CMS-1674-P Medicare Program: ESRD Prospective Payment System (CY 2018), Payment for Renal Dialysis Services furnished to Individuals with Acute Kidney Injury, and ESRD Quality Incentive Program (PY 2019-2021). (August 28, 2017)

The Annual CMS Quality Conference is scheduled to convene on February 12-14, 2018 in Baltimore, MD. Forum leaders have traditionally convened a 1-hour meeting with CMS leaders at the conclusion of this meeting and they hope to continue this tradition in 2018.

Volunteer members of the Forum hosted a 5-part NQF Project Webinar Series this Fall in which a summary of 9 NQF Projects were presented. The webinars were recorded and are [archived on the Forum website](#).

Regular calls between Forum and CMS leadership continue. The following topics were discussed during the most recent calls:

- QIIG/CCSQ has received a number of requests from the new White House Administration including: identify ways in which they could address the opioid epidemic - CCSQ submitted a report in response; identify ways to reduce the burden to healthcare providers; increase focus and data and results aligning expenditures with improved outcomes.
- CMS has developed procedures to prevent and remove AKI patients from CROWNWeb.
- Quarterly meetings of the data user's group and CMS leadership have resumed; Forum leaders thanked Cindy Tourison for her leadership in renewing these discussions around CROWNWeb.
- Network 14 and KCER representatives shared their experiences from recent hurricanes highlighting the impact on patients, the use of best practices identified from previous hurricane experiences, and opportunities for improvement in the future.
- CMS will be seeking input from the community regarding the QIO/QIN 12th SOW.

And we remember James "Jim Annuschat, KPAC Representative Network 12, who passed away November 2016. Jim was a life-long educator, a patient advocate and active member of the Forum's KPAC. He also spent a few years as a background singer for Glen Campbell! Rest in Peace Jim.



*At the end of everything we do...is the patient. -Val Riley*