

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

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## Since the last issue:

- The Forum's Board of Directors will convene their **Annual Winter Forum Board of Directors meeting** on February 19-21, 2016, in New Orleans, LA. The agenda is being developed and the Board welcomes topic suggestions from members. Topic suggestions can be sent to the [Forum office](#).
- The Kidney Patient Advisory Council (KPAC) has collaborated with the NCC to develop the "**Patients Speak**" video which uses the audio recording from the March 2015 Quality Conference, specifically the KPAC panel with the same title (Patients Speak). The video may be viewed and shared at the [Forum website](#).
- The recently completed **Transitions of Care Toolkit is now available for download** at the [Forum website](#).
- Included in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)/Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPA) "trade bill" is a provision on coverage and payment for renal dialysis services for individuals with **acute kidney injury**. Changes will become effective in 2017.
- Ongoing **regular calls between Forum and CMS leadership** continue to provide an opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues important to the Networks. Recent conference calls and a face-to-face meeting on December 3, 2015, included a discussion about the recent provision on coverage and payment for renal dialysis services for individuals with AKI. Forum leaders and KPAC representatives shared concerns regarding the mingling of AKI patient data with ESRD patient data used by Networks for quality activities. CMS leaders provided assurance that plans are in place to prevent the mingling of data and will work with the NCC to provide a cross-walk of claims data to ensure Networks are receiving data only for ESRD patients.
- Recent calls with CMS have also included a discussion of the **ICH CAHPS survey data** which is anticipated to be shared with dialysis facilities and ESRD Networks in 2016 and is included as one of numerous QI activities at the Network level. On behalf of the KPAC membership, Ms. Carey shared concerns expressed by KPAC members regarding the low patient participation rate and the desire for the KPAC to identify ways in which its membership may help to increase these rates.
- Members of the Forum KPAC have prepared a [written response](#) to the December 8, 2015 [NN&I article](#) "Nephrology nurse's comments about dialysis patients stirs controversy." The NN&I article references a November 20, 2015 [New York Times article](#) "Who turned my blue state red?"