

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

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Priority Issues

The Forum Board of Directors met on August 13 - 15, 2010.

Key accomplishments since the January Forum Board Meeting include submission to CMS of the following:

- Request that CMS review directives pertaining to the posting of Network Annual Reports (submitted January 14);
- Review of achievement of the FFBI goals (submitted on February 2);
- Fistula First Data Reliability document (submitted on March 17); and
- Recommendations pertaining to the Network contracts, CROWNWeb, and Network funding.

The Forum would like to recognize Andrew Howard, MD, FACP and Susie Stark for their outstanding leadership on the FFBI goals and data reliability documents.

At the August Board meeting, the following action steps were identified.

Area of support to the Networks	Next Steps
Network Redesign	A workgroup has been assembled to review the Forum's previously submitted comments and reorganize them within the framework of the National Priorities Partnership's Six Aims. This draft will be presented to the Forum Membership in early November.
CROWNWeb	The Forum is developing a white paper which will be submitted to the Networks for review by mid-September. The paper outlines four key priorities: access, reports, data quality, and resources/security.
Quality Incentive Program (QIP) Proposed Rule	A workgroup will identify issues relevant to the Networks and submit comments by mid-September.
Rapid-response communications	Disparities in patient care as a result of bundling: letter outlining an ongoing role for the Networks to be submitted to L&M Research. Involuntary Discharges (IVD's): Forum will submit written recommendations to CMS about the changing IVD classifications. The Forum will also inform AAKP's Public Policy Committee of these classifications based on new ESRD Conditions for Coverage. FFBI: The Forum will outline Network needs for success during the contractor transition and beyond.
Collaboration with LDOs and the Renal Community	The Forum is drafting a statement of Principles to be followed in situations of conflict surrounding business interests in dialysis facilities which may put patient care and quality at risk. The Forum will endorse the RPA Catheter Initiative, and has been approved for Associate Membership in the National Transitions of Care Coalition (NTOCC).

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Spotlight: Medical Advisory Council (MAC)

Under the leadership of Chair Stuart Goldstein, MD, the Forum Medical Advisory Council (MAC) 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.

The MAC has now developed a QAPI Toolkit which will be complete by the end of August. Also in development are educational PowerPoint presentations which will support each of the already completed Toolkits.

The MAC will hold its next face-to-face meeting in spring 2011.

Education

The Forum, under the leadership of Jay Ginsberg, MD, is leading a collaboration between the Networks, dialysis organizations, and the renal community to present a conference entitled, "Creating a Culture of Quality: Developing the Infrastructure to Meet Quality Improvement Requirements". The goal of the conference is to assist quality personnel in their approach to improving culture in those facilities that are unable to meet current performance standards because they have had difficulty adopting modern quality improvement techniques. The conference is currently planned for March 2011 in Washington, DC.

Beginning in fall 2010, the Forum will host quarterly educational WebEx presentations on topics of interest to Network staff and leadership. Proposed topics include: national/legislative issues such as the impact of ARRA and meaningful use, HAI, bundling, comparative effectiveness, and accountable care organizations.

Forum Representatives in the Renal Community

Forum representatives serve on the following committees:

- KCQA (Dr. Goldman);
- National Quality Forum (Dr. Jerry Jackson);
- Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative (FFBI) Clinical Practice Workgroup (Drs. Meyer and Goldman);
- USRDS External Advisory Committee (Dr. Meyer);
- National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) Coordinating Council (Drs. Latos and Goldman);
- UNOS/OPTN (Ms. Carlson and Ms. Kitsen); and the
- Board of the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) (Dr. Goldman and Ms. Mayo)