



## Cannulation Training for AV Fistulas

**CHANGE CONCEPT # 8**

*The Florida  
ESRD  
Network is  
Here to  
Help!*

- Facility identifies and uses best cannulators and best teaching tools (e.g. videos) to teach AV Fistula cannulation to all appropriate dialysis staff.
- Dialysis staff use specific protocol for initial dialysis treatments with new AV Fistulas and assign the most skilled staff to such patients.
- Facility offers option of self-cannulation to patients who are interested and able.

### *Assess Your Barriers to Cannulation Training for AV Fistulas —*

1. Our best cannulator has a patient assignment with minimal time for teaching AV Fistula cannulation skills.
2. Facility does not have a protocol for cannulation of newly placed AV Fistula.
3. Self-cannulation has not been practiced in our facility in the past.

### *Interventions to Barriers*

1. Assign staff members to perform AV Fistula cannulation working one-on-one with the best cannulator, until skills become proficient.
2. Provide routine inservices and workshops for staff on AV Fistula cannulation technique using practice arms, videos, etc.
3. In collaboration with nephrologist, establish specific protocol for staff use during initial cannulation of patients who have a new AV Fistula, (e.g. needle gauge and length, one needle only initially, blood flow rate, tourniquet use, etc.)
4. Assign the most skilled staff to patients who have a new AV Fistula.
5. Evaluate the functioning status of new AV Fistulas each dialysis treatment.
6. Ask nephrologist to consider constant site (button hole) AV Fistula cannulation technique. Educational video available from University of Missouri-Columbia 573-443-1531 ext 254.
7. In collaboration with nephrologist and administrator, establish process to offer and teach self-cannulation to patients that are able.
8. Refer to patient and staff vascular access educational resource lists for vascular access training and teaching materials.
9. Download *Cannulation Camp: Basic Needle Cannulation Training for Dialysis Staff, Sample Cannulation of New Fistula Policy and Procedure, Staff and Patient Educational Resource lists* and other tools found in the Fistula First Toolkit on the ESRD Network website at [www.fmqai.com/ESRD/tools.htm](http://www.fmqai.com/ESRD/tools.htm).
10. Share this Fistula First vascular access information with your nephrologists, administrator, dialysis staff and patients.



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