

Tips for ESRD Networks for Working with Shelters

When you learn that a shelter for displaced individuals may be located in your area:

1. Contact the organizers as soon as possible and provide them with general information and materials about dialysis.
2. Provide the Network's emergency contact numbers to shelter management.
3. Recognize and acknowledge to the shelter staff that the dialysis patient population is a small subset of the whole health care challenge in a disaster. Your goal is to ease the burden of caring for this subset.
4. Have a list of all nearby facilities. Creating a map of facilities listed by zip code is helpful. If there are treatment slots available nearby, send patients to the same LDO they were using pre disaster will facilitate electronic record exchange. Convenience of location and capacity should be the primary determinants of referral. Be sure to identify facilities with:
 - i. Isolation stations
 - ii. Staff trained to care for Life Site vascular access
5. Ask staff to query all evacuees upon registration at a shelter if they are on dialysis and when their last treatment took place.
6. Provide triage information to all shelters so that they may help identify those patients requiring immediate dialysis.
7. Ask that dialysis patients either have a separate shelter or a separate area in any shelter so that their needs can be addressed more easily, including the routine transport to dialysis three times a week.
 - i. Take signs and post these directing dialysis patients to that area
 - ii. Provide a poster for the food service area reminding dialysis patients about the emergency diet.
 - iii. Prepare "Welcome" packages for dialysis patients to include basic information about dialysis arrangements and special needs of dialysis patients (emergency diet, fluid restrictions, etc.)
8. Mobilize a team of Network volunteers to provide direct service to dialysis patients in the shelters, including helping them to arrange care at nearby facilities. Consider contacting local ANNA and CNSW chapters for help.
 - i. Ask for a designated area in a highly visible location; try to have an "address" within the shelter for the patients.
 - ii. Establish and designate an area as a transportation station from which patients depart and arrive from dialysis & notify the transportation providers of the location
 - iii. Create a master list of all dialysis patients in the shelter; this might include an information sheet on each patient
 - iv. Ask patients about medications and assist them to medical area for prescription needs
 - v. Check vascular access for patency – many may be clotted. Consider using identified your surgical experts ("Champions") to mobilize the surgical community if needed.
 - vi. Ask/ remind patients to inform dialysis facilities or the dialysis desk at the shelter if they are moving out to another location