



January Monthly Update

Alliance Activities

Productive January for Alliance Staff and CMS

Throughout the month of January, Alliance staff and Steering Committee Members will have several meetings with offices at the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The meetings include: CMS Office for Clinical Standards and Quality, the Kidney Affinity Group, the Kidney Innovation Accelerator, and CMS Telehealth Staff. We will provide updates following the meetings.

Regulatory Update

Comprehensive End-Stage Renal Disease Care (CEC) Report

The annual performance evaluation report for the Comprehensive End-Stage Renal Disease Care (CEC) Model can be viewed at [this link](#). There are 37 ESRD Seamless Care Organizations (ESCOs) participating in the Comprehensive ESRD Care Model. Notably, home dialysis is tracked in the performance report and was examined as a metric of care quality. While interviewees reported observing relatively little impact of the CEC Model on home dialysis operation or adoption thus far, CMMI will continue to track utilization, as the Alliance has advocated.

The report notes that two ESCO participants that are members of the Alliance took advantage of two waivers in order to promote home dialysis. DCI noted that they use performance-based payments to participant physicians, which incentivizes nephrologists to speak with each ESCO patient at least once quarterly, and reported one instance of a patient opting to switch to home dialysis because of this discussion. Rogosin took advantage of “patient engagement incentive waivers,” which allow ESCOs to provide in kind services, such as technology. They noted that home dialysis equipment services rely on internet connectivity to send important information to the dialysis organization, and that one patient was starting home dialysis but was unable to afford internet service. *“Send[ing] him home on home dialysis - that wouldn’t have been possible without the waiver,”* one staff member noted.

While we are pleased that the patient engagement incentive waiver allows for the provision of technology, ESCO participants are still limited by Medicare restrictions on telehealth, including the restriction on home as an originating site. We understand that ESCOs should receive waivers to this effect in 2018, but will continue our advocacy with CMS to ensure their implementation.

Home Dialysis in the News

High-stakes fight over dialysis centers looms over California health agenda, POLITICOPro:
<https://www.politicopro.com/health-care/article/2018/01/high-stakes-fight-over-dialysis-centers-looms-over-california-health-agenda-251796>