



National
Kidney
Foundation®

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April 22, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor, State of New York
Executive Chamber, State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) is deeply concerned about reported shortages of dialysis equipment, supplies and trained dialysis care team staff needed to treat COVID-19 patients who are experiencing Acute Kidney Injury (AKI), as well as to continue ongoing dialysis treatment for New Yorkers with chronic kidney failure. As the largest, most comprehensive, and longstanding patient-centric organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of kidney disease in the U.S., NKF stands ready to work with you on this emerging challenge.

According to recent reports, between 20 and 40 percent of COVID-19 patients in the intensive care unit experience Acute Kidney Injury (AKI), many requiring continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT) or other forms of dialysis to filter the patient's blood, remove toxins, and maintain the body's chemical balance. This therapy is essential to a patient's survival.

Unfortunately, the increased demand for bedside dialysis has exceeded many hospitals' supply of hemodialysis and CRRT equipment and supplies and has overwhelmed the trained staff needed to provide this life-saving treatment. This shortage is an immediate threat to patients' health and safety and requires attention and action. While this is a vexing problem with no easy solution, the NKF has identified several strategies and recommendations to help address this challenge.

- 1. Increase Patient Awareness of their Risk.** While we continue to collect and analyze data about COVID-19 and its risk factors, it is evident that people with kidney diseases are at significantly higher risk of suffering from severe COVID-19 complications and death. We urge you to use your platform to educate New Yorkers living with kidney diseases to empower them to reduce their unique risk for COVID-19 and its complications.
- 2. Maximize Existing Resources.** NKF's membership includes thousands of nephrologists, advanced practitioners, nurses, dialysis technicians, social workers, and other clinicians who have decades of experience serving kidney patients. Their expertise in the different treatment modalities makes them a unique resource that can be leveraged at this time. Many of our senior leaders have been offering practical guidance and advice to hospitals facing a shortage on how to

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stretch existing resources while maintaining high quality patient care. We stand ready to be a resource for you, your staff, and local facilities so that they can navigate this crisis.

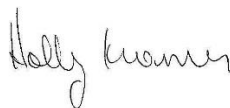
3. **Tap the National Stockpile.** It is our understanding that FEMA's National Stockpile includes a reserve of dialysis machines. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to contact FEMA leadership to secure additional dialysis machines and supplies.
4. **Support Efforts to Ramp up Production and Distribution.** NKF has been in conversations with several device manufacturers who are accelerating production to support increased patient care levels. Further, we are communicating with the federal government on strategies to prioritize and sequence distribution to high-need areas and to relocate supplies as the epidemic unfolds across the country. If New York has specific needs or recommendations for these suppliers and policymakers, please let us know.
5. **Support Surge Staffing.** NKF commends health care professionals who are coming out of retirement, traveling across the country, and rolling up their sleeves to meet this challenge. We applaud our colleagues at the American Nephrology Nursing Association for developing a tool to help match volunteers with hospitals and dialysis centers that are experiencing a staffing shortage. We encourage you to utilize these resources and to support professionals who step up during this time.
6. **Share Learnings with Other States.** The COVID-19 pandemic will likely continue to surge and recede over the coming months and beyond. It is important to assess how our health care system – hospitals, state policymakers and the federal government – managed this crisis so that we can better prepare for future outbreaks. We are eager to hear from your team on how we collectively can better manage this issue in the future so that we can better meet patient needs.

In closing, we thank you for your exemplary leadership, guidance, and perseverance in our fight against COVID-19 and look forward to working with you to ensure that we are meeting the needs of kidney patients and their families. If you have questions or would like to follow up on our requests or recommendations, please contact Sharon.Pearce@kidney.org.

Sincerely,



Kevin Longino
CEO and transplant patient



Holly Mattix Kramer, MD, MPH
President