MEDICARE’S CONDITIONS FOR COVERAGE
FOR END STAGE RENAL DISEASE FACILITIES

Overview:
The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) new rules, the Conditions for Coverage (CiCs) for End Stage Renal Disease Facilities, went into effect October 2008. Dialysis facilities must meet these requirements to be certified under the Medicare program. These new CiCs focus on (1) improving the quality of care for patients; (2) establishing performance measures; (3) encouraging patient participation in their care and treatment and (4) eliminating outdated requirements. The rulemaking reflects advances in dialysis technology and care since 1976, when the first regulations were issued.

Why:
Individuals who receive dialysis treatment depend on quality care and staffing in dialysis facilities to survive. They spend on average 10-12 hours every week receiving dialysis treatments, a process that cleans the blood and removes excess fluid because their kidneys have failed.

Medicare pays for most dialysis treatments. In order to be certified and eligible to receive Medicare payments, all dialysis facilities must comply with the CiCs and all other federal and state requirements. Facilities are evaluated during on-site surveys to assess their compliance with the regulations.

Revising the CiCs are part of a broader CMS effort to modernize regulations and improve quality of care, promote transparency and move toward patient-centered care using quality measures. All dialysis facilities are required to report performance data as a way to track improvements in care and health outcomes.

What:
The CiCs include new guidelines intended to improve patient care and outcomes.

- **Patient Information:** in a language they can understand about all treatment options
- **Treatment Options:** if facility does not offer an option, it must provide information on how to receive that treatment, such as home dialysis or peritoneal dialysis, elsewhere
- **Transplant:** receive information and referral to be evaluated for a transplant if desired
- **Patient Rights:** including communicating end of life wishes in an advance directive and requiring the facility to inform patients if they will not be able to honor their wishes
- **Staffing:** ensure that dialysis centers are adequately staffed and staff meet all qualifications and training, with new standards developed for dialysis technician training and certification
- **Team Approach:** staff must work with the patient to develop and regularly update care plans
- **Measure and Assess:** patients’ needs and outcomes of dialysis care
- **Safety Guidelines:** updated to ensure a safe dialysis environment
- **Quality Improvements:** facilities must have plans to assess and improve care delivery
- **Electronic Data:** collection and reporting of patient and facility outcomes

The CMS link to the final rule: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CFCsAndCoPs/13_ESRD.asp