

NRAA Sends Letters to CMS, CDC Urging Prioritization of Patients with ESRD in COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

November 24, 2020 – The National Renal Administrators Association (NRAA) sent a letter to Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services (CMS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urging for strong consideration for the prioritization of patients with End-Stage Renal Dialysis (ESRD) and the dialysis clinic staff who provide their care in the COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

“The high risk of virus exposure for ESRD patients and their caregivers at dialysis clinics combined with the underlying prevalence of multiple comorbidities and overall suppressed immunity have resulted in substantially higher rates of hospitalization and likely mortality from COVID-19 in the ESRD patient population compared to non-ESRD patients. It is therefore imperative that ESRD patients and the dialysis clinic staff who care for them have priority status in COVID-19 vaccine distribution.” NRAA wrote.

CMS data shows

- The heightened risk of COVID-19 exposure that ESRD patients face has led to Medicare beneficiaries with ESRD having a *more than four times* greater likelihood of contracting the virus than aged and disabled beneficiaries.
- ESRD beneficiaries who have contracted COVID-19 have had a hospitalization rate *more than seven times higher* (2,194 per 100,000 beneficiaries) than that of either aged (320 per 100,000) or disabled (268 per 100,000) beneficiaries.*
- The disproportionately high rates of hospitalization for Medicare ESRD beneficiaries with COVID-19 follow data reported by the U.S. Renal Data System (USRDS), which strongly suggest a discernible and marked increase in mortality in the ESRD patient population from COVID-19.

Read the full letters to [CMS](#) and [CDC](#) here.

*CMS. “Preliminary Medicare COVID-19 Data Snapshot: Medicare Claims and Encounter Data: Services January 1 to September 12, 2020, Received by October 9, 2020.” Slide 10.

About NRAA: NRAA is a voluntary organization representing dialysis providers throughout the United States. Since 1977, the diverse membership is primarily comprised of small dialysis organizations and medium-sized dialysis organizations and for-profit and non-profit providers serving patients in urban, rural, and suburban areas in both freestanding and hospital-based facilities. NRAA is the leading resource and voice for independent and community-based dialysis providers. For more information, visit www.nraa.org

Contact:

Marc Chow, Executive Director
National Renal Administrators Association (NRAA)
mchow@nraa.org
(831) 234-1299