



December 1, 2016

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
131 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
475 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Isakson and Warner:

The Alliance for Home Dialysis (Alliance) is pleased to support the Senate Finance Committee's Chronic Care Working Group discussion draft for improving the care and treatment of Medicare beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions.

We appreciate that the discussion draft would add home and dialysis facility as originating sites for home dialysis patients' clinical assessment via telehealth. Permitting patients and their physicians the option to participate in telehealth encounters that include not only video interaction but also the transmission of clinical data through technologies like remote patient monitoring may encourage more patients to adopt home dialysis as a treatment option. We urge the Working Group to ensure the final legislation incorporates the complementary roles of video and remote patient-monitoring enabled data transmission needed for a robust telehealth encounter.

Not only would this policy help to promote choice of modalities, but it has the potential to benefit current patients on home dialysis. Travel to a physician's office or a dialysis facility to see their doctor is oftentimes difficult for those patients for whom travel would require medical transportation. Minimizing the need for patients to travel to a hospital or facility-qualifying site to see their doctor also would support those actively employed or seeking employment without sacrificing the appropriate level of clinical interaction. Pediatric patients often need to travel long distances for clinic, and telehealth would permit children to minimize school absences, decrease transportation costs, and decrease lost work days for parents.

The Alliance also supports the Working Group's proposal to support access to Medicare Advantage plans for individuals with kidney failure. With appropriate risk adjustment, Medicare Advantage plans offer the opportunity for improved care coordination and potentially additional home access for both newly diagnosed and prevalent ESRD patients, because these plans are wholly responsible for better patient outcomes and reduced costs. We have seen evidence of this in the private market; for example, recognizing the health and financial benefits of home dialysis, private plans such as Kaiser Permanente⁷ cover the equipment and medical supplies required to dialyze at home at no cost to their insured patients.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide this feedback, and look forward to continue working with you on this important initiative. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Spira at michael@homedialysisalliance.org or 202-466-8700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Silverman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephanie Silverman
Executive Director

Cc: The Honorable Orrin Hatch, Chairman
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member



Participating Organizations (2016)

American Association of Kidney Patients
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
Baxter
Cleveland Clinic
DaVita
DEKA Research and Development
Dialysis Clinic, Inc
Dialysis Patient Citizens
Fresenius Medical Care
Greenfield Health Systems
Home Dialyzors United
International Society for Peritoneal Dialysis, North American Chapter
Medical Education Institute
National Kidney Foundation
Northwest Kidney Centers
NxStage Medical
Outset Medical, LLC
Renal Physicians Association
Satellite Healthcare
Southwest Kidney Institute
The Rogosin Institute
TNT Moborg International Ltd.