March 27, 2018

The Honorable Lynn Jenkins
House of Representatives
1526 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Jenkins,

The Alliance for Home Dialysis (Alliance) is pleased to support your legislation, H.R.3635, the Local Coverage Determination Clarification Act, which would revise the process by which Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) issue and reconsider Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs).

The Alliance is a coalition of kidney dialysis stakeholders, representing patients, clinicians, providers, and industry that works to promote policies that facilitate treatment choice for individuals in need of dialysis, and to address systemic barriers that limit access to the many benefits of home dialysis. Many patients on dialysis, both in center and home, benefit from a schedule of more frequent dialysis, which is comprised of shorter, more frequent sessions. More frequent dialysis makes a significant tangible clinical difference for patients, and has been cited in clinical evidence as the cause for many health-related quality of life improvements. Studies have demonstrated that more frequent hemodialysis results in faster recovery time after treatment and fewer side effects; improved cardiac status and survival rates; and increased opportunity for rehabilitation. Importantly, these benefits are seen in patients with end stage renal disease (ESRD) suffering from both acute and chronic conditions. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has stated that Medicare will reimburse more frequent dialysis so long as it is medically justified.

While some MACs have been inconsistent about reimbursement for more frequent dialysis, more of them had been honoring the provider-patient relationship and covering additional sessions of dialysis as they were medically justified. However, in recent months, the majority of MACs have issued identical LCDs that would limit access to more frequent dialysis, which contradicts CMS’ long-standing coverage policy.

We appreciate that H.R 3635 would provide transparency and accountability to the MACs currently serving Medicare beneficiaries. This legislation would go a long way to ensure patients, and providers, would have access to treatment options that dramatically improve health outcomes. Once again, we are pleased to support this initiative and look forward to continuing to work with you as the bill moves through the legislative process. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Spira at michael@homedialysisalliance.org or 202-466-8700.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Silverman
Executive Director
Participating Organizations (2018)

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.