



What are advance directives?

- Forms you sign to give directions about healthcare decisions
- Are **only** used if you are unable to communicate what care you want
- Help make sure that your wishes about your care are followed
- Concern **only** your healthcare, not your money or property

Durable power of attorney for health care

- Legal form you sign that says who you want to make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to speak for yourself
- The person you choose can decide what kind of medical care you receive
- Should be someone you trust who understands the care you want
- Must be witnessed by two people or notarized

Living will

- Legal form you sign stating what kind of medical care you want at the end of your life, if there is no chance you'll get better

How to make an advance directive

- Your social worker has forms and more information; you don't need a lawyer
- Discuss your wishes with your doctor and your family
- After you make an advance directive, give copies to:
 - Your doctors
 - Your dialysis center
 - Other healthcare providers

What if I don't have advance directives, and I'm too sick to say what care I want?

- Under Washington law, family members, in order of how they are related to you, will make decisions
- If you have no relatives, a judge may have to decide about your care

What if I change my mind?

- You can cancel or make new advance directives and get rid of old forms
- Let your family, friends and health care providers know you made changes and give them updated copies



Every patient has the right to stop dialysis, or not to start

- A patient with serious medical problems may feel that dialysis does not provide a quality of life that is acceptable
- Patients who are at the end of life may choose not to continue life sustaining treatment, like dialysis

How is this decision made?

- This is a hard decision and should be discussed with loved ones and your doctor
- Patients may decide to continue dialysis if problems can be treated, for example, by:
 - Relieving pain
 - Treating depression
 - Making changes in dialysis treatment

Is stopping dialysis suicide?

- Most religions teach that people have the right to stop medical treatment if it is not helping or is not improving quality of life
- If you have concerns, speak to your religious advisor

What can I expect if I stop dialysis?

- People can live a few days to several weeks, depending on
 - How much kidney function they have
 - Their medical condition
 - What they eat and drink
- Your doctor will continue to care for you and address symptoms you experience
- Patients become unconscious and death is usually peaceful and without pain

How should I prepare if I decide to stop dialysis or not to start dialysis?

- Talk to your doctor and your family about your decision and plans for your care
- Speak with the Kidney Palliative Care team at NKC to discuss palliative care options
- Make advance directives so that your wishes are followed—your social worker can help
- Put financial and legal matters in order

What about hospice?

- Hospice organizations provide care at the end of life to keep you comfortable, and provide support to you and your family
- Your dialysis social worker or doctor can help with hospice arrangements



If you have a concern about your care

What is a grievance?

- A concern or complaint about the care at Northwest Kidney Centers (NKC)
- You have the right to file a grievance
- You may file a grievance with NKC, with an outside agency, or both
- Your family, legal guardian, or other representative can file a grievance for you

If you have a grievance

We want to resolve problems early

Patients and others are urged to first express their concerns to those directly involved in their services, such as unit managers, clinical directors, or social workers.

- All patients and others can file a complaint/grievance by mail, e-mail; or verbally in person, by telephone or via voice mail messages. People can identify themselves, remain anonymous, or communicate through another person of their choice
- You can file your grievance anonymously
- You may also file a grievance with the agencies that oversee care at dialysis centers for the government (see below)

Will filing a grievance affect my care?

- **No**, you will not be treated differently
- You have the right to express concerns without fear that your care will change
- Your grievance will be kept as confidential as possible

How are grievances handled at NKC?

- We give priority to any grievance concerning patient or staff safety
- We will investigate and steps will be taken to address your concerns
- The unit or department manager is responsible for the investigation, documentation, resolution, and follow-up of the complaint/grievance.
- We will respond within 10 business days; if it will take longer, you will be notified

What if my grievance is not resolved at my dialysis center?

- You can take your grievance to an outside agency (see below)

How to reach agencies that respond to dialysis center grievances

Comagine Health (NWRN)

P.O. Box 33400

Seattle, WA 98133-0400

206-923-0714

Toll free: 1-800-262-1514

Washington State Dept of Health

Health Systems Quality Assurance

Complaint Intake

P.O. Box 47857

Olympia, WA 98504 - 7857

360-236-4700

Toll free: 1-800-633-6828

Accreditation Commission for

Health Care (ACHC)

139 Weston Oaks Court

Cary, NC 27513

919-785-1214

Toll free: 1-855-937-2242



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Treat others (staff, patients, visitors) with courtesy and respect

- We provide care to patients with a wide range of needs. You can show respect to your fellow patients by:
 - Limiting scents that could trigger allergic reactions in others
 - Using earbuds or headphones
 - Keeping your voice down
 - Avoiding abusive/threatening talk or behavior
 - Not discussing other patients' medical information
 - Refraining from taking photographs, or making video/audio recordings while on our premises

Follow the law when at dialysis clinic

- Help keep our centers safe by:
 - Not bringing guns, knives, or weapons to dialysis
 - Not engaging in illegal activities such as using or selling drugs, or consuming alcohol on the premises
 - Not damaging or stealing equipment and property belonging to NKC or others



Maintain professional relationships with staff

- We promote equal treatment of patients by all staff. You help us do this by:
 - Refraining from giving gifts to staff
 - Not exchanging money with staff for any purpose
 - Avoiding contact with staff through social media, email or phone/texting
 - Not dating staff or engaging in social activities with them

Take responsibility for your care

- You are the most important member of your care team! Keep yourself healthy by:
 - Attending dialysis as prescribed by your nephrologist
 - Taking your medications as prescribed
 - Following fluid and diet restrictions
 - Keeping medical appointments
 - Following emergency procedures in the center and at home, when needed
 - Knowing phone numbers to call for help—your center, your care team, your doctors, transportation

Follow your hemodialysis schedule

- To ensure everyone's needs are met:
 - Arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled "on" time
 - Call as soon as you know you will be late or miss a scheduled treatment
 - We may need to shorten your treatment time if you arrive late
 - Ask for a make-up treatment if you miss your regular treatment
 - Wait in the lobby for staff to call you into the treatment area as chair assignments may change
 - We may need to change your schedule for safety or operational reasons—we will give you as much notice as possible
 - All NKC staff complete extensive training to provide care for all patients
 - We are unable to exclude staff from being assigned to you
 - You have the right to reschedule treatment; speak to the clinic manager if you have care concerns



Remain safe at dialysis

- These guidelines will help ensure a safe and comfortable dialysis treatment:
 - Consider bringing your own blanket, sheet, or pillow (use washable cover)
 - Take items home after each treatment and wash often, using bleach if there are bloodstains
 - Bring only battery-operated electronic devices and ensure they are charged
 - Keep personal items secure as NKC is not financially responsible for them
 - Wear shoes when walking in the center
 - Prepare for your treatment—
 - Get the ice/water you will want
 - Weigh yourself and make note of it
 - Wash your access arm
 - While on dialysis—
 - Keep your face and access visible
 - Only allow staff to adjust your machine
 - Allow blood pressure checks
 - Use wheelchair to go to restroom, or as requested by staff, to prevent falls
 - Hold puncture sites after dialysis

Visitors

- Visitors are allowed except in times of increased infection or safety risk and follow the same guidelines for respect that are expected of patients
 - We may limit the number of visitors or length of visit time depending on space, in the unit, activity, or other situations
 - During a medical emergency, visitors may be instructed by staff to leave the treatment area
 - Children should not accompany their parents to dialysis routinely
 - For infection control, children under age 10 must remain in the waiting area and under the care of an adult
 - Children ages 10 -15 may come into the treatment area under the supervision of an adult other than the patient
 - Please check with your unit for current visitor guidelines and review the Visitor Infection Prevention handout

Let us know when...

- Your name, address, phone, emergency contacts or health insurance has changed
- You want to speak to your social worker, dietitian, nurse, patient finance coordinator, or unit manager
- You wish to speak to staff privately

Your Rights as a Dialysis Patient



Your rights as a patient in a Medicare-certified facility	What this means for you:
Respect, dignity, and recognition of his/her individuality and personal needs, and sensitivity to his/her psychological needs and ability to cope with kidney disease.	Staff should always treat you with courtesy and take into consideration your special needs and situation.
Receive all information in a way that he/she can understand.	We try to give clear explanations and to make written materials easy to understand. Always ask if you don't understand. If you need an interpreter, we will provide one at no cost to you.
Privacy and confidentiality in all aspects of treatment.	Private discussions with staff can be scheduled in a room outside of the treatment area. We will use screens, blankets, curtains, etc. to avoid exposing private body parts in the treatment area, but your face and access site must always be visible during dialysis. We protect the security of your medical records and maintain privacy under HIPAA rules.
Privacy and confidentiality in personal medical records.	
Be informed about and participate, if desired, in all aspects of his/her care, and be informed of the right to refuse treatment, to discontinue treatment, and to refuse to participate in experimental research.	You can choose to take part in your care; for example, participating in your plan of care conference, putting in your own needles, etc. You have the right not take part in your care if you choose. We will inform you of any changes in your dialysis treatment prescription and the reasons for those changes. You have the right to refuse any treatment, and to refuse to take part in any experimental research.

Your Rights as a Dialysis Patient, p. 2



Your rights as a patient in a Medicare-certified facility	What this means for you:
<p><i>Be informed about his/her right to execute advance directives, and the facility's policy regarding advance directives.</i></p>	<p>You have the right to have an advance directive (a document in which you direct your healthcare decisions if you are unable to speak for yourself). Your dialysis social worker will provide more information about advance directives.</p>
<p><i>Be informed about all treatment modalities and settings, including but not limited to, transplantation, home dialysis (home hemodialysis, intermittent peritoneal dialysis, continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis, continuous cycling peritoneal dialysis), and in-facility hemodialysis. The patient has the right to receive resource information for dialysis modalities not offered by the facility, including information about alternative scheduling options for working patients.</i></p>	<p>We will provide information on types of dialysis and kidney transplant. Northwest Kidney Centers offers all types of dialysis; hemodialysis in a center and at home, peritoneal dialysis (CAPD and APD). Note: Home dialysis is not available to patients with Acute Kidney Injury (AKI). If you work or go to school, we will do all we can to accommodate your schedule.</p>
<p><i>Be informed of facility policies regarding patient care, including, but not limited to, isolation of patients.</i></p>	<p>To protect other patients from disease, patients with certain kinds of infections, such as hepatitis B, must dialyze in special areas or locations. If you should have this kind of infection, you will be informed of changes of location and schedule.</p>
<p><i>Be informed by the physician, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or physician's assistant treating the patient for kidney disease of his/her own medical status as documented in the patient's medical record, unless the medical record contains a documented contraindication.</i></p>	<p>Your doctor (or his/her nurse practitioner or physician's assistant) must provide you with information about your medical condition.</p>

Your Rights as a Dialysis Patient, p. 3



Your rights as a patient in a Medicare-certified facility	What this means for you:
<i>Be informed of the services available in the facility and charges for services not covered by your insurance.</i>	You will get advance notice of any charges for services not covered by your insurance.
<i>Receive the necessary services outlined in the patient plan of care described in the Conditions for Coverage, section 494.90.</i>	Your care team, which includes you, makes a personalized plan for your care, and you have a right to receive the services in that plan.
<i>Be informed of the rules and expectations of the facility regarding patient conduct and responsibilities.</i>	Your care team will give you a copy of Northwest Kidney Centers' Patient Responsibilities which covers our rules and expectations.
<i>Be informed of the facility's internal grievance process.</i>	You can make a complaint about your care to Northwest Kidney Centers. We have a process for handling complaints to make sure that your concerns addressed. The policy is posted in your center, and we will give you more information on the process.
<i>Be informed of external grievance mechanisms and processes including how to contact the ESRD Network and the State survey agency.</i>	You can make a complaint about your care to the Northwest Renal Network or to the Washington State Department of Health survey agency. The contact information for both is posted in your center.
<i>Be informed that he/she may file internal or external grievances, personally, anonymously or through a representative of patient's choosing without reprisal or denial of services.</i>	You can make complaints anonymously or have another person make the complaint for you. You may continue to receive care at NKC and we will treat you with respect and in a professional manner.

Your Rights as a Dialysis Patient, p. 4



Your rights as a patient in a Medicare-certified facility	What this means for you:
<i>Be informed of the facility's policies for transfer, routine or involuntary discharge, and discontinuation of services to patients.</i>	We have policies about transfers to another center, whether by your choice or because we are discharging you. The policy is posted in your unit, and we will provide an explanation of those policies.
<i>Receive written notice 30 days in advance of an involuntary discharge, after the facility follows the involuntary discharge procedures described in the Conditions for Coverage, section 494.180(f)(4). In the case of immediate threats to the health and safety of others, an abbreviated discharge procedure may be allowed.</i>	We must give you 30 days written notice before discharging you, unless there is an immediate threat to the health or safety of others.

At Northwest Kidney Centers, we take your rights seriously. We are focused on your health, quality of life, and the success of your kidney dialysis treatment.

If you are concerned about your health or general well-being while at an NKC location, please notify a staff person and/or manager as soon as possible.



If you want to transfer to another Northwest Kidney Centers dialysis center

- Your social worker can help you
- If an acceptable dialysis schedule is not available at another center right away, you'll be placed on waiting list
- We'll do all we can to help you get the time and place you want

If you want to transfer to a center outside of Northwest Kidney Centers

- Your social worker can help you locate another center and make arrangements
- We will send your medical records with your written permission

If you want to be discharged from Northwest Kidney Centers

- Because you no longer want or need dialysis from Northwest Kidney Centers
 - You're stopping dialysis
 - Or getting a transplant
 - Or you want to find another dialysis center on your own
- Let us know; we can send your medical records to a new dialysis provider with your written permission

We can transfer or discharge you without your consent **ONLY** under certain conditions—

- If the medical care you need can't be provided safely at your current center
- If your center is being closed
- If you are threat to health and safety
- You must be given 30 days written notice
- Your care team must try to resolve the problem; transfer and discharge are used only when a problem can't be resolved
- Your doctor and clinic medical director must agree to the transfer or discharge
- Reasons for transfer or discharge must be clearly shown in your medical record
- We must make every effort to arrange for your continued dialysis care

If a patient is an immediate, severe threat to health and safety of others

- 30 days notice for discharge or transfer is not required—the patient will be asked to leave the center and 911 may be called

Northwest Kidney Centers **WILL NOT** transfer or discharge you:

- If you are unable to pay for services
- If you don't follow your treatment plan
- Due to verbal abuse alone, except for threats of violence or harm