

# Be Heard

## Tips for Talking with Your Care Team

This tool has been developed by kidney patients from the ESRD NPFE-LAN\*—Legacy Communications Team. It offers ideas for how to best talk to and build a relationship with your doctors, nurses, dialysis technicians, dietitian, and social worker.



**Ask questions.** If you have concerns or you do not understand something that is said, ask questions. If the information is still not clear, ask again in a different way.



**Make sure you understand.** When talking with your healthcare team, repeat back what you have heard in plain language. For example, you can say, “So, what I have heard you say is ...”



**Get smart.** Learn as much as you can about ESRD, dialysis, and your treatment options. Your healthcare team is a good source of information. They can also help you find useful resources.



**Share your story.** Tell your healthcare team about your interests, hobbies, and lifestyle. Understanding who you are will help you and your care providers make a plan of care (POC) that supports all of your healthcare needs.



**Stay safe.** Make sure that all members of the healthcare team wear gloves, wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before caring for you.



**Be informed.** Know what medications you take and why you take them. Keep an updated list handy. Request a copy of your lab results. Also share a copy of your medical records from all hospitalizations with your doctor and facility.



**Ask for help.** Reach out to family, friends, or your caregiver. Invite them to your appointments. Encourage your care partners also to ask questions.



**Connect with others.** Talk to other kidney patients. Find out if your facility has a peer mentoring program. Join a support group.



**Become involved.** Attend your POC meeting. Work with your healthcare team to decide on the best treatment for you.

### *For more information about your care, ask:*

1.

*What is the main problem?*

2.

*How can this be treated?*

3.

*Why is this important for me?*



\*End Stage Renal Disease National Patient and Family Engagement-Learning and Action Network

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