

How to Be a Transplant Advocate

Key Considerations for Dialysis Facilities



Importance of Advocacy

Dialysis centers play a crucial role in the lives of people with end stage renal disease (ESRD) awaiting kidney transplantation. Being a transplant advocate is vital for improving patients outcomes, reducing health disparities, and offering comprehensive support for patients throughout the transplant journey.

Guiding Patients Through the Transplant Process

Gather Listing Criteria from Transplant Centers

- Note previous patients' experiences with transplant centers to help patients better understand the process.

Collaborate With Transplant Centers

- Establish care coordination teams with transplant centers and encourage regular communication with them.
- Foster a collaborative approach to patient care by inviting transplant center outreach coordinators to talk with the dialysis team and patients in the clinic.

Educate and Provide Patient Support for Multiple Listing

- Inform patients about the potential benefits of listing at multiple centers, such as increasing their chances of finding a suitable donor.

Reducing Barriers to Transplant

Help with Healthcare System Navigation

- Provide patients with reminders for upcoming appointments to help them stay on track.
- Help patients with completing forms, making the process less overwhelming for patients.
- Use patient advocates to call and help patients feel supported.

Alleviate Financial Constraints

- Provide patients with comprehensive information about insurance options, financial aid programs, and cost-saving strategies to help alleviate financial burden (e.g., post-transplant care).

Offer Support Services

- Connect patients to support groups and counseling services that may optimize recovery and enhance quality of life.

Address Transportation Challenges

- Collaborate with hospitals, local resources, and the patient's insurance plan to address transportation challenges related to attending medical appointments.

Creating Positive Change

Becoming a strong advocate for kidney transplantation can make a significant difference in the lives of people with ESRD. These tips can create a more supportive and equitable healthcare environment for all people. Advocating for patients can positively impact patients' lives and foster a more effective and equitable healthcare system.

References:

- ESRD NCC. Learning and Action Network (LAN) Call. March 7, 2023. Accessed March 28, 2024. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-8NET3qU84>.
- ESRD NCC. Structural Competency Training—Module 3: Enact Structural Interventions to Advance Health Equity. February 20, 2024. Accessed March 28, 2024. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YneI5am_3g.