



KCER - Kidney Community Emergency Response Coalition

Dear Community Partner,

End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) is a growing issue in the United States. ESRD, or kidney failure, occurs when the kidneys can no longer function well enough to sustain life. ESRD is fatal unless treated with dialysis or a kidney transplant, both of which can have serious risks and consequences. Most patients choose hemodialysis for their treatments, which requires them to visit a dialysis center three times a week. Without dialysis, the patient may require hospitalization or die from fluid overload and other complications.

Disasters, both natural and man-made, can cause major disruptions of life-sustaining dialysis services. Do you know how many ESRD patients and providers are in your jurisdiction? Are you aware of their special requirements of daily care? Do you include dialysis and kidney transplant patients in your emergency and disaster plans? Did you know that new federal regulations require dialysis facilities to establish a relationship with their local disaster planners?

To help you answer these questions, the Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) Coalition is pleased to present this *Community Partner Packet*. This packet is modeled on the successful work of the Florida Kidney Disaster Coalition (FKDC).

The *Community Partner Packet* includes information to help you incorporate the special requirements of the kidney community into your jurisdiction's emergency and disaster plans. Some of the materials provided in this valuable packet include:

- KCER Brochure – Outlining information on the Coalition's mission, vision, and goals.
- Zip Code Report – List of ESRD patients, broken down by state, county, and modality.
- ESRD For Policy Makers – Provided by the American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA), this booklet provides a comprehensive overview of kidney failure, co-morbid conditions, and treatment options.
- Save a Life – What you need to know about emergency preparedness for individuals with kidney disease.

As a local, state, or federal official, you are responsible for creating or enacting the policy and plans that guide your community and your constituency. As a unified voice for kidney patients and providers, KCER aims to educate both renal and non-renal stakeholders on the unique needs of kidney patients, while also working to facilitate partnerships that provide a framework for disaster readiness and continuity of care for the kidney community.

Through partnership, education and the dedication of all stakeholders, we will work to create a community better prepared for disasters.

If you have any questions on how to be more informed, please contact us at KCER@nw7.esrd.net or call (813) 383-1530, extension 3267.



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Community Partner Packet Best Practices:

- Understand the special requirements of dialysis and kidney transplant patients and providers. The “Save a Life” brochure in this packet outlines only a few issues that you may face in a disaster.
- Identify your dialysis and transplant population in your jurisdiction. The patient counts provided in this packet are current as of the date listed at the top of each page.
- Contact and build a relationship with your local End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network. ESRD Networks assist consumers and ESRD facilities and other providers of ESRD services to refine care delivery systems to make sure ESRD patients get the right care at the right time. To find your local Network, visit the Network Coordinating Center at <http://esrdncc.org/>.
- Each dialysis facility is different in their available resources and potential needs during a disaster. Work with local dialysis providers to evaluate their readiness and encourage ESRD providers and organizations to participate in your jurisdiction’s disaster planning process.
- The KCER Coalition urges ESRD patients and providers to utilize the color purple (or lavender) to identify themselves to emergency management personnel, such as shelter workers or law enforcement. The Texas ESRD Emergency Coalition pioneered this effort with great success.
- Each ESRD Network provides a public way to track the open/closed status of dialysis facilities in disasters. One method is to use www.dialysisunits.com. Local emergency management should identify their open and closed facilities in order to ensure patients’ continuity of care.