



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) AND THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF KIDNEY PATIENTS (AAKP) LAUNCH PARTNERSHIP TO LIMIT DIALYSIS-RELATED BLOODSTREAM INFECTIONS

TAMPA, FLA – The American Association of Kidney Patients and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have announced a formal partnership under the establishment of the *Making Dialysis Safer for Patients Coalition*, a special initiative designed to save patient lives by empowering both patients and dialysis care providers to drive down bloodstream infection rates within dialysis facilities. AAKP is the nation’s largest and oldest independent kidney patient organization with over 100,000 members.

The *Coalition* is a collaboration of healthcare related organizations, patient advocacy organizations, industry partners and other public health partners that span the dialysis spectrum. Its goal is to prevent bloodstream infections (BSIs) in hemodialysis patients by creating informational resources and implementation tools focused on evidence-based practices and to disseminate these resources to patients, family members and the healthcare community.

This month, the AAKP and CDC are releasing the co-branded [Conversation Starter to Prevent Infections in Dialysis Patients](#). AAKP assisted in the creation of the document by coordinating a number of patient focus groups designed to offer patient input and practical insights on a variety of infection-related issues dialysis centers and patients confront on a daily basis. The most common and pressing concerns were used as the basis of the “Conversation Starter.” The *Conversation Starter* is a way for patients and family members to initiate a discussion with dialysis facility staff about steps the facility takes to prevent infections.

Paul T. Conway, president of AAKP and a former dialysis patient and former Chief of Staff of the U. S. Department of Labor stated, “Kidney patients nationwide understand the highly credible work the CDC performs every day to keep all Americans healthy, safe and fully engaged in both life and work. AAKP is honored to collaborate with CDC to help educate and empower kidney patients on how to protect themselves from costly and life-threatening bloodstream infections in dialysis and to remain as healthy and as productive as possible.”

“Infection prevention and safe healthcare are our top priorities and patients play a critical role in both of these,” said Dr. Priti Patel, medical director of the *Making Dialysis Safer for Patients Coalition*. “Patients should be informed of what CDC considers best hemodialysis practices to prevent infections and should feel empowered to ask healthcare providers as many questions as needed to better manage the safety of their care. That includes open discussions about hand hygiene practices, catheter care, and knowing the signs and symptoms of infection.”

AAKP encourages dialysis facilities to take a proactive approach to beginning this important discussion and educating their patients, patient family members, and employees about infection prevention by routinely distributing and using the Conversation Starter. It is important to keep the conversation going about preventing infections.

For more information on the Making Dialysis Safer Coalition or to download a copy of the Conversation Starter to Prevent Infections in Dialysis Patients, visit www.aakp.org/education/brochures or <https://www.cdc.gov/dialysis/patient/conversation-starter.html>. Printed copies of the Conversation Starter may be requested by contacting AAKP at (800) 749-2257.

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AAKP is a voluntary non-profit organization founded by kidney patients, which for more than 45 years, has been dedicated to improving the quality of life of kidney patients through education, advocacy and the fostering of patient communities. The programs offered by AAKP inform and inspire patients and their families to better understand their condition, adjust more readily to their circumstances, and assume more normal, productive lives in their communities.