



American Association of Kidney Patients
aakp.org

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Jennifer Rate
Director of Communications and Digital
Operations
jrate@aakp.org
(813) 400-2394

Kidney Patients Honor Top Physician for Disease and Infection Prevention

Medal Goes to Dr. Barry Smith, President of Dreyfus Health Policy & Research

Longtime Champion of Patients, Community Health, and Medical Innovations

Washington, D.C. - The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), America's oldest and largest independent kidney patient advocacy organization, awarded its 2024 Medal of Excellence Award in the Physician Category to Dr. Barry Smith, PhD, MD, President of New York-based Dreyfus Health Policy and Research Center. The AAKP announcement occurred during the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Renal Physicians Association (RPA) in Baltimore, Maryland.

The RPA is a long-standing ally of the AAKP and is the professional organization of nephrologists whose goal is to ensure quality care under the highest standards of medical practice for patients with kidney disease and related disorders. AAKP and RPA collaborate on many national health and policy initiatives, including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Making Dialysis Safer for Patients Coalition](#), as well as efforts to increase competitive pay and reimbursement for the unique, life-saving services nephrologists provide to their patients under the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) program.

Dr. Smith was selected as a Physician Honoree based on his distinguished career spanning academia, government, and clinical care management and his dedicated efforts to expand patient engagement in infection prevention and medical innovation. Dr. Smith has served in prestigious positions, including Deputy Chief of Surgical Neurology at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), President and CEO of the Rogosin Institute, and Director of the Dreyfus Health Foundation in New York City, New York. Dr. Smith presently serves as the President of the Dreyfus Health Policy and Research Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting health and wellness with a particular focus on community engagement, including nearby neighborhoods of East New York City. Dr. Smith is the author of over 150 peer-reviewed medical articles, helped launch the CDC's Making Dialysis Safer for Patients Coalition as a stakeholder and President of the Rogosin Institute, and was a co-editor of the book [Problem Solving for](#)

[Better Health – A Global Perspective](#). [Dr. Smith](#) currently serves as a member of AAKP’s National Board of Directors.

“Dr. Smith’s career has been defined by the relentless pursuit of excellence. His unwavering optimism about the future of medicine is grounded in a clear-eyed understanding of how lives can be saved and societies improved when research, science, innovation, and patient care choice and access to new treatments are allowed to flourish without senseless interference,” stated Edward V. Hickey, III, AAKP President and a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran who is also Chair of [AAKP’s Veterans Health Initiative](#) (VHI). “On behalf of AAKP, we express our sincere gratitude to our strong allies at the Renal Physicians Association for inviting us to present this award during their very important anniversary meeting, and we are proud of our shared legacy of honoring physician excellence at RPA events since 1996.”

As a leader recognized at the local, national, and international level, Dr. Smith has transcended borders to bring together diverse experts to increase the public’s understanding of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and the profound unmet need for earlier disease screening, detection, and more timely treatments. Dr. Smith is highly regarded for his focus on disease prevention through better community education on issues including food choices and nutrition as well infection prevention through improved safety measures and access to new safety innovations. He has been a tireless champion for increasing patient access to new drugs, devices, and diagnostics for all patients, especially among people of color and historically disadvantaged communities that are disproportionately impacted by kidney diseases and multiple related co-morbidities.

The Medal of Excellence recognition is one of the nation’s highest honors for professionals involved in kidney health. The award elevates local, national, and international experts who champion the principles of greater patient care choice, protection of the integrity of the patient/doctor relationship, and more rapid development and patient access to kidney care innovations that prevent needless suffering.

The award was presented by AAKP’s Vice President, Ms. Jennifer Jones, also a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran and a two-time kidney transplant recipient with experience on both in-center and home dialysis. Upon presenting the award, Ms. Jones said, “Dr. Smith has dedicated his life to advocating for greater respect for the dignity and lives of all patients.” Ms. Jones also remarked, “Dr. Smith has been a loyal friend to highly vulnerable kidney patients, and he has maintained strong partnerships with AAKP, fellow professionals, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in our joint mission to make dialysis safer and to fight against preventable healthcare-acquired infections, including catheter-related bloodstream infections, through greater education and medical innovations.” AAKP has launched a nationwide effort to mobilize dialysis patient consumers to demand increased dialysis treatment safety measures, including the use of [new, FDA-approved drugs aimed at reducing patient burdens such as blood stream infections](#).

AAKP defines high-quality kidney care as patient consumer choice of, and access to, medical care and innovations that best enable patients to pursue their own aspirations, including meaningful part-time or full-time employment in a job or career field of their choice; owning a home; starting or having a family; and a building a secure retirement of which the career achievements of this year’s honoree, Dr. Smith, exemplifies.

The Medal of Excellence includes award categories in transplant surgery, transplant professional, physician, nursing, dietitian, social work, and dialysis technician. A review committee selected this year’s honorees based on numerous nominations. For additional information on 2024 award recipients, recognition events hosted by AAKP allies, or to sponsor the 2024 Medal of Excellence Award program,

please visit <https://aakp.org/programs-and-events/medal-of-excellence/> or contact Jerome Bailey, Director of Patient Engagement and Advocacy at jbailey@aakp.org or (813) 513-0730.

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About the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP): Founded in 1969, AAKP is the largest kidney patient organization, driving policy discussions on kidney patient consumer care choice and treatment innovations. In the past decade, AAKP patients have helped gain lifetime transplant drug coverage for kidney transplant recipients (2020); new patient-centered policies via the White House Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health (2019); new job protections for living organ donors under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) from the U.S. Department of Labor (2018); and Congressional legislation allowing HIV-positive organ transplants for HIV-positive patients (2013). AAKP virtual platforms and social networks are internationally known for their impact. Follow AAKP on social media at [@kidneypatient on Facebook](#) and [@kidneypatients on X](#), and visit our website at www.aakp.org.