

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

A monthly report by Benesch on the
Dialysis & Nephrology Industry

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June 4, 2021

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

Calendar of Events

JUNE 9–23, 2021

Webinar: Palliative Care Series-Communication, Medical Management and Evidence-based Approaches

For information, please click [here](#).

JUNE 10, 2021

Webinar: Understanding the Link Between the Arteriovenous Access, Cardiac Function and Effects of Hemodialysis

For information, please click [here](#).

JUNE 10, 2021

RPA Town Hall: Alternate Payment Models

For information, please click [here](#).

JUNE 23, 2021

Safety In Home Dialysis: Engaging Stakeholders to Prevent Non-infectious Complications

For information, please click [here](#).

SEPTEMBER 24–25, 2021

OEIS 8TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

JASON GREIS will be speaking.

For more information, please click [here](#).

SEPTEMBER 29, 2021

National Kidney Foundation of Illinois (NKFI) Golf Classic

For information, please click [here](#).



Please contact us if you would like to post information regarding your upcoming events or if you'd like to guest author an article for this newsletter.


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Calendar of Events (cont'd)

**Dialysis &
Nephrology**
DIGEST

SAVE THE DATE

**Benesch Healthcare+ First Annual
Dialysis and Nephrology Conference**



Thursday, December 2, 2021
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Cocktail reception to follow

The Gwen Hotel
521 North Rush Street | Chicago, IL 60611

Please join us for this full-day conference addressing business and legal issues facing nephrology and dialysis providers. Hear from industry leaders discussing current and future trends in care delivery, business and payment models and legal and regulatory issues.

Please contact MEGAN THOMAS (mthomas@beneschlaw.com) for more information about this event or if you require assistance.

Invitation to follow.

**Benesch
Healthcare+**

www.beneschlaw.com

June 4, 2021

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

Nephrology and Dialysis Practices

MAY 10, 2021

DOJ reports University of Miami agrees to \$22M settlement over FCA allegations

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) alleged the University of Miami engaged in three fraudulent practices under the False Claims Act:

1. Knowingly engaging in improper billing relating to its hospital facilities. Medicare allows the conversion of physician offices into hospital facilities if they meet certain criteria. One of these requirements is notifying Medicare beneficiaries of the higher costs associated with receiving care in hospital facilities as opposed to physician offices. DOJ alleges this wasn't done;
2. Billing federal healthcare program for medically-unnecessary lab tests for kidney transplant patients from the university's Miami Transplant Institute (MTI); and
3. Causing Jackson Memorial Hospital (JMH) to submit inflated claims for reimbursement for pre-transplant lab tests conducted at the MTI in violation of related party regulations.

The University of Miami agreed to pay a \$22-million settlement to resolve the allegations. In a separate agreement, JMH paid a \$1.1-million settlement to the DOJ.

SOURCE: The United States Department of Justice

MAY 13, 2021

NKF urges Conn. to pass living donor protection bill; similar legislation in Pa. becomes law

The National Kidney Foundation is urging Conn. lawmakers to pass [HB6387](#), which would provide protections to living organ donors. Specifically the bill would:

- Eliminate discrimination against living donors by prohibiting life and health insurance companies from dropping a living donor, changing their premiums or refusing coverage based on their status as a living kidney donor;
- Develop health education programs to increase awareness of CKD among primary care physicians and the public;
- Support transplantation as the preferred treatment for CKD;
- Encourage the development of early detection and prevention of CKD in the primary care setting;
- Promote health equity in the detection and treatment of CKD; and
- Permit the state to adopt an "Opt-Out Donor Registry" system.

Meanwhile, in [Pa.](#), a similar measure was signed into law by the state's governor. It also prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against organ or tissue donors but includes family and medical leave to eligible employees for the preparation and recovery necessary for donation surgery.

SOURCE: The Day

June 4, 2021

Nephrology and Dialysis Practices (cont'd)

MAY 25, 2021

[Strive Health brings holistic approach to kidney disease management to Ky. dialysis center](#)

At the [Strive Health](#) Owensboro Dialysis Center, director James Salas says the primary aim is for patients with end-stage renal failure to manage their illness without resorting to dialysis. He explains that the company's holistic approach begins with staff (case manager, nurse practitioner, dietician, social worker and clinical pharmacist) assessing the individual needs of the clients and then formulating a care program specific to that person. As preventative medicine forms one of the cornerstones of Strive Health's program, shared decision making, patient education and nutritional advice can delay or prevent the necessity of dialysis.

SOURCE: The Owensboro Times

MARCH 5, 2021

[SSM Health utilizes Strive Health's platform to guide kidney disease treatment](#)

St. Louis-based non-profit health system [SSM Health](#) says it was looking for a kidney care program to predict when to engage patients to improve their experience and outcomes and lower costs. It chose Strive Health's [CareMultiplier](#) platform, which uses advanced analytics and machine learning to identify where patients fit on the kidney disease continuum so clinicians can tailor treatment programs to fit individual patients' needs. SSM Health states the first four months after the program was launched in June 2020, acute utilization for both CKD and ESRD patients fell by more than 20%, while ED use dropped by more than 25% among those same populations.

SOURCE: Healthcare IT News

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Nephrology and Dialysis Practices (cont'd)

MAY 10, 2021

[DaVita to employ Baxter's automated peritoneal dialysis system for home kidney care program](#)

DaVita will use the [Homechoice Claria](#) automated peritoneal dialysis (APD) technology developed by Baxter as part of its home-based dialysis offerings. The system combines APD with DaVita's remote patient monitoring technologies so that patients and care teams can conduct digital communications in real time. DaVita revealed the Homechoice Claria system is already in use with 250 patients and the success of that test phase means it can be offered more generally.

Related: [DaVita taps into Baxter's connected peritoneal dialysis system for home kidney care](#)—Fierce Biotech

SOURCE: DaVita

MAY 18, 2021

[Fresenius rolls out connected home dialysis health platform](#)

The cloud-based [Kinexus](#) therapy management platform is meant for the [Liberty Select](#) cyclor home peritoneal dialysis therapy systems. The platform connects the dialysis machine to a portal so clinical staff can monitor data at all times and modify treatments whenever necessary. Fresenius adds the Kinexus platform will be available to all dialysis providers.

SOURCE: Fresenius Medical Care

APRIL 30, 2021

[Intermountain develops in-house kidney care program leveraging AI, synthetic data](#)

Utah-based health system Intermountain Healthcare says its kidney services program uses a population health approach to nephrology care. The idea is to put in place a data-driven, proactive care team strategy in which nephrologists, advanced practice providers and kidney care navigators use predictive analytics to engage patients earlier in their disease to mitigate effects of CKD and ESRD. The raw data was filtered through algorithms developed by staff, combining clinical and administrative information to certify patients by CKD stage. Intermountain then follows up by working upstream on patients with early-stage disease.

SOURCE: Healthcare IT News

June 4, 2021

Nephrology and Dialysis Practices (cont'd)

APRIL 14, 2021

Cricket Health: First year of patient support program, disease ID platform reduced hospitalizations by two-thirds

Cricket Health launched the machine-learning-enabled StageSmart disease identification model and a patient support program called MyCricket one year ago. It claims its programs reduced hospital admissions by 65% and resulted in 94% patient satisfaction and 90% patient retention. MyCricket connects kidney disease patients with peer support, peer mentors, multidisciplinary care teams and educational resources. In the past year, connections between Cricket Health members and their care teams averaged once per week. The company adds 40% of members were engaged with staff a minimum of 10 times per month. Kidney disease patients typically only interact with specialists two-to-four times per year.

Related: [Cricket Health ranks among highest-scoring businesses on Inc. magazine's annual list of best workplaces for 2021](#) — Cricket Health

SOURCE: Healthcare Dive

MAY 10, 2021

U.S. Renal Care opens three kidney care facilities on Fla.'s Gulf Coast

U.S. Renal Care says a home therapy clinic and a 17-chair, in-center hemodialysis facility are located in Fort Myers, while a second home therapy clinic is in Cape Coral. The home therapy clinics will only offer home hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis to adult and pediatric patients. U.S. Renal Care states the facilities will provide greater treatment options to patients with CKD and ESRD in Southwest Fla.

SOURCE: U.S. Renal Care

MARCH 3, 2021

WAO granted patent for third-generation wearable artificial kidney

[Wearable Artificial Organs](#) (WAO) of Beverly Hills, Calif., says the latest version of its wearable artificial kidney weighs just two pounds and is equipped with a rechargeable battery. The 2.0 model was 10 pounds heavier, the company notes. WAO states the device should improve patients' autonomy and quality of life, adding preliminary data suggest patients on dialysis who use the WAK 3.0 could have fewer limits on what they can eat and drink.

SOURCE: Wearable Artificial Organs

June 4, 2021

Nephrology and Dialysis Practices (cont'd)

MAY 12, 2021

[Renal care provider Diaverum acquires online booking firm booknowmed.com](#)

Swedish-based dialysis provider [Diaverum](#) says the takeover of [booknowmed.com](#) of Cyprus will enable patients to book treatments at any of over 400 clinics in 54 countries. The online booking agency is also a holiday dialysis partner with 60 kidney patient associations in 20 countries, enabling patients to continue with their dialysis treatment while on vacation. Terms of the transaction weren't released.

SOURCE: Diaverum

MAY 27, 2021

[Medtech company Outset Medical joins home healthcare lobby group](#)

[Outset Medical](#), a medtech based in San Jose, Calif., specializing in dialysis innovations, joined the [Moving Health Home](#) coalition, a business group advocating for home healthcare among legislators. Outset's main product is the [Tablo](#) hemodialysis system that can be adapted for home use. The coalition was unveiled in Mar., and includes members such as Amazon Care, Amwell, Landmark Health and Signify Health.

SOURCE: Outset Medical

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June 4, 2021

VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs

MAY 18, 2021

[SCA asks court to dismiss federal case of alleged non-poach collusion case](#)

Surgical Care Associates (SCA) filed a [proposed reply brief](#) asking that a case brought against it by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) be dismissed. The federal government alleges SCA was part of a scheme whereby a number of companies agreed not to hire away each others' top managers. SCA points out there's no precedent that any such agreement was "unlawful under any mode of analysis." SCA is part of UnitedHealth Group's Optum division. The charges are the first from the DOJ's antitrust division's investigation into no-poach agreements. Violators can face a fine of up to \$100 million.

Related: [Geisinger, Evangelical ask court to toss suit alleging 'no-poach' deal](#)—Becker's Hospital Review

SOURCE: Becker's Hospital Review

MAY 12, 2021

[Tenn. law would raise CON annual fees by \\$1,900](#)

The Tenn. governor signed [SB1281](#) into law May 26 that makes several changes to the state's certificate-of-need (CON) requirements, exempting more healthcare providers from needing to apply for a certificate but raising fees for providers. Hospitals will see their annual fees go up from \$300 to \$5,000. For ASCs, the CON will be raised by 1,900%, to \$2,000 per year. The law also decreases the CON application process by 75 days.

SOURCE: Becker's ASC Review

MAY 4, 2021

[S. Car. cardiology practice forms JV with Azura, NCP focused on growth, physician recruitment](#)

[Anderson Heart](#) of Anderson, S. Car. is partnering with [Azura Vascular Care](#) and [National Cardiovascular Partners](#) (NCP) in a joint venture that completes an equity recapitalization. The partnership will focus on growth and physician recruitment in S. Car. Anderson Heart is a cardiology and vascular practice, Malvern, Pa.-based Azura operates cardiology ASCs and outpatient vascular care, while NCP, a division of Fresenius, considers itself a market leader of the outpatient, hybrid cardiovascular center (ASC/office-based lab) model.

SOURCE: The Capital Corporation

June 4, 2021

Other Interesting Industry News

MAY 21, 2021

[U.K. tech company buys Calif.-based physician network](#)

[Babylon Health](#), a London company that provides medtech services, purchased [Meritage Medical Network](#), a physician-led healthcare network based in Novato, Calif. Babylon uses AI and virtual care services to provide patients with access to information, health monitoring and clinicians through their mobile devices. Babylon is also acquiring a Calif. health plan platform, [FirstChoice Medical Group](#).

SOURCE: Becker's ASC Review

[ESRD Treatment Choices \(ETC\) Model Measurement Year 2 Achievement Benchmarks Available](#)

The End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Treatment Choices (ETC) Model Measurement Year 2 (MY2) achievement benchmarks are now available. MY2 begins July 1, 2021 and ends June 30, 2022. You can access the ETC Model MY2 Achievement Benchmarks [here](#). You can also access the ETC Model MY2 Achievement Benchmarks on the [ETC Model website](#), under Additional Information.

For more information regarding our nephrology and dialysis experience, or if you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact:

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