

\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\*

Contact: Christine Feheley • (202) 699-0238 • CFeheley@asn-online.org

## KIDNEY SOCIETY PARTNERS WITH US GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT DIALYSIS INFECTIONS

### Highlights

- The Nephrologists Transforming Dialysis Safety (NTDS) Project aims to safeguard dialysis patients from potentially deadly infections.
- The American Society of Nephrology is partnering with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement the project.

*More than 450,000 kidney failure patients in the United States are being treated with dialysis.<sup>1</sup>*

**Washington, DC (September 28, 2016)** — The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) has partnered with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to protect dialysis patients from developing infections, the second leading cause of death in this patient population. The 3-year, \$2.2 million dollar effort is aimed at engaging the kidney community, health departments, nephrologists, and other stakeholders to implement best practices to safeguard against infection in dialysis patients.

“We want to make dialysis safer so patients won’t need to be concerned about getting an infection,” said Dr. Priti Patel, lead for CDC’s dialysis safety efforts. “The safety and well-being of dialysis patients is of utmost importance. We are excited to team up with ASN to ensure that nephrologists have the tools they need to help their patients get the safe healthcare they deserve.”

Patients undergoing dialysis are at a high risk for infection because their treatment requires frequent use of catheters or insertion of needles to access the bloodstream. Also, dialysis patients have weakened immune systems, and they require frequent hospitalizations where they might acquire infections. In 2008, an estimated 37,000 bloodstream infections occurred among hemodialysis patients with central lines, and one-quarter of these patients may have died as a result of the infection. Since 1993, hospitalization rates among hemodialysis patients have increased 47% for bloodstream infections and 87% for vascular access infections.<sup>2</sup>

Efforts that ASN will lead as part of the Nephrologists Transforming Dialysis Safety (NTDS) Project, include:

- Dedicating part of its annual conference, ASN Kidney Week (which is the largest nephrology meeting in the world), in 2017 and 2018 to infection prevention topics;
- Developing a webinar series related to infection prevention topics and creating a dedicated infection prevention web on the ASN website;
- Creating an educational module on infection prevention for fellowship programs;
- Engaging ASN's more than 16,000 members via social media, membership surveys, and focus groups on topics related to infection prevention;
- Working to forge an association between state public health and nephrologists to increase collaboration and promote awareness of reportable infectious diseases and participation on state healthcare-associated infection advisory committees.

"This project will raise awareness about the vital need to safeguard against infection in dialysis patients," said ASN President Raymond C. Harris, MD, FASN. "The goal is to save lives with prevention, early detection, and the most effective treatments."

Dr. Harris also announced that Alan S. Kliger, MD, of the Yale New Haven Health System, will lead the project. "With his background, experience, and passion, Dr. Kliger is the ideal person to ensure that this project exceeds expectations."

Since 1966, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) has been leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients. ASN has more than 16,000 members representing 112 countries. For more information, please visit [asn-online.org](http://asn-online.org) or contact us at 202-640-4660.

1. <http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/Pages/kidney-disease-statistics-united-states.aspx>
2. <http://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/dialysis/>

###

**Tweet: New collaborative project between the CDC and ASN aims to prevent infections in dialysis patients.**