

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE until April 20, 2017 – 5:00 PM (ET)**

**Contacts:** Tracy Hampton • (312) 339-9067 • [thampton@nasw.org](mailto:thampton@nasw.org)  
Christine Feheley • (202) 640-4638 • [cfeheley@asn-online.org](mailto:cfeheley@asn-online.org)

## **STUDY EVALUATES HOW WELL FELLOWSHIP TRAINING PREPARES KIDNEY SPECIALISTS**

### **Highlights**

- Most nephrology fellows rated overall quality of teaching in fellowships as either “good” or “excellent,” and over half of second-year fellows felt “fully prepared” for independent practice.
- Fellows indicated a desire for more education in several core nephrology topics, including peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis, ultrasound, and kidney pathology.

**Washington, DC (April 20, 2017)** — A recent study examines how new kidney specialists feel their training has prepared them to care for patients. The findings, which appear in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* (JASN), provide important information on how to improve the education of future nephrologists.

After completing a specialty training program, or residency, following medical school, physicians typically spend at least 2 years in fellowships to receive additional expertise. To evaluate the educational needs and interests of fellows focused on kidney care, Rob Rope, MD (Stanford University) and his colleagues analyzed survey results from 320 US nephrology fellows.

Most respondents rated overall quality of teaching in fellowships as either “good” (37%) or “excellent” (44%), and most (55%) second-year fellows felt “fully prepared” for independent practice. Fellows indicated a desire for more education in several core nephrology topics, including peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis, ultrasound, and kidney pathology. “The indication that fellows may be underprepared to use home dialysis modalities is, unfortunately, consistent with prior studies and represents a major barrier to the greater implementation of these patient-centered therapies,” said Dr. Rope.

The results also highlighted tensions between patient care and educational needs. As the volume of work in academic medical centers increases over time, the challenge of meeting patient care needs may come at the expense of trainees’ education. “This is a delicate balance fellowships may struggle with over time,” said Dr. Rope.

Unfortunately, the survey also indicated that several ASN educational resources are not frequently utilized, despite delivering content on topics of interest to fellows, such as home dialysis. This information may be helpful in the development and evaluation of future educational tools.

This study identifies areas where improvements in nephrology fellowship structure and content could help ensure that patients with kidney disease—the 9th leading cause of death in the United States—receive the highest quality of care only a nephrologist can provide.

Study co-authors include Kurtis Pivert, Mark Parker, MD, Stephen Sozio, MD, MHS, and Sylvia Bereknyei Merrell, DrPH, MS.

Disclosures: Robert Rope is an ongoing contributor to the Renal Fellow Network blog (one of the educational media included in the survey) without financial interest. Kurtis Pivert is an employee of the ASN.

The article, entitled “Education in Nephrology Fellowship—A Survey-Based Needs Assessment,” will appear online at <http://jasn.asnjournals.org/> on April 20, 2017, doi: 10.1681/ASN.2016101061.

*The content of this article does not reflect the views or opinions of The American Society of Nephrology (ASN). Responsibility for the information and views expressed therein lies entirely with the author(s). ASN does not offer medical advice. All content in ASN publications is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions, or adverse effects. This content should not be used during a medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Please consult your doctor or other qualified health care provider if you have any questions about a medical condition, or before taking any drug, changing your diet or commencing or discontinuing any course of treatment. Do not ignore or delay obtaining professional medical advice because of information accessed through ASN. Call 911 or your doctor for all medical emergencies.*

*Since 1966, 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 nearly 17,000 members representing 112 countries. For more information, please visit [www.asn-online.org](http://www.asn-online.org) or contact the society at 202-640-4660.*

###

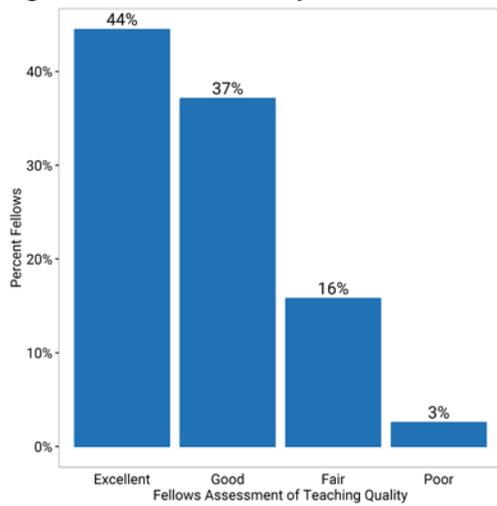
Tweet: Study evaluates how well fellowship training prepares kidney specialists.  
<http://www.bit.ly/ASN-XXXX>. Twitter Handles For Authors and Division  
Rob Rope – @renalpolitics  
Kurtis Pivert – @kpivert  
Mark Parker – @kidneyfuture  
Steve Sozio – @stephensozio

The American Society of Nephrology®, ASN®, Kidney Week®, CJASN®, JASN®, NephSAP®, and ASN Kidney News® are registered trademarks of ASN

Sylvia Bereknyei Merrell – @sbereknyei  
 Glenn Chertow (Stanford Chief of Nephrology) – @gchertow  
 Stanford Division of Nephrology – @StanfordNeph

Facebook: A recent study examines how new kidney specialists feel their training has prepared them to care for patients. The findings, which appear in the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*, provide important information on how to improve the education of future nephrologists..

**Figure 1: Fellows Perception of Overall Educational Quality**



**Figure 2: Fellows Self-Assessment of Preparedness for Independent Practice**

