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Public Awareness Initiative for Advancing American Kidney Health Announced as a Public-Private Partnership with National Kidney Foundation and the American Society of Nephrology

Goals are to enhance awareness of kidney disease, educate clinical professionals and spur innovation by entities serving the kidney disease community.

Washington, D.C. – November 4, 2019 – Today the [National Kidney Foundation](#) (NKF) and [American Society of Nephrology](#) (ASN) announced a new partnership with the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) (HHS) to collaborate on the Public Awareness Initiative outlined in the [Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health](#), an historic action initiative to transform kidney health. The goals of the Public Awareness Initiative are to enhance awareness of kidney disease, educate clinical professionals and spur innovation by entities serving the kidney community.

This collaborative partnership among HHS, NKF and ASN will provide education about the risks of kidney disease and promote the early detection, treatment and management of kidney disease to improve patient outcomes. This initiative will also share information to enhance awareness of the causes and consequences of kidney disease. NKF is the largest patient organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention and treatment of kidney disease, and ASN is the largest kidney health professional organization leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases.

“One-third, or 33%, of the American public is at risk for developing kidney disease due to factors such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, obesity and family history of kidney disease. It is critical to reach the undiagnosed so that, wherever possible, kidney disease can be stopped dead in its tracks before a patient progresses to kidney failure,” said Kevin Longino, CEO of National Kidney Foundation and a kidney transplant patient. “Reaching an estimated 80 million Americans at risk requires a broadscale effort and we are very pleased to partner with HHS and ASN on the Public Awareness Initiative, which will include a nationwide Kidney Risk Campaign™ over the coming months.”

“Aligning the reach and resources of ASN, NKF and HHS is a vital first step to realize the bold vision articulated in this initiative by addressing both awareness and action,” said Mark E. Rosenberg, MD, FASN, ASN President. “I am confident that through our combined efforts, we will raise the profile of kidney disease as a

public health crisis, while simultaneously mobilizing the global community of patients, nephrologists, health professionals, innovators, and investors to rapidly advance innovative new approaches to prevent, diagnose, and treat kidney disease.”

“Most Americans who suffer from kidney disease don’t even know it. To raise awareness and provide them with opportunities to improve their health, we look forward to working with nephrologists, other healthcare providers, patients, payors, innovators, and public health professionals inside and outside of government,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “This partnership is an early step in President Trump’s kidney initiative, the first major effort by a President to improve kidney health since Medicare began covering end-stage renal disease patients in 1972. Alongside this important public health work, HHS will reform payments and regulations so that fewer Americans suffer kidney failure, more options are available for dialysis patients, and more organs are available for transplant. Together, these efforts will transform how we care for kidney disease in America—and improve the lives of millions of Americans suffering from it.”

About Kidney Disease

In the United States approximately 37,000,000 adults have [kidney disease](#) – and most aren’t aware of it. One in three American adults are at risk for kidney disease. Risk factors for kidney disease include diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and family history. People of African American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander descent are at increased risk for developing the disease. African Americans are three times more likely than whites, and Hispanics are nearly 1.5 times more likely than non-Hispanics, to develop end stage renal disease kidney failure.

More than 726,000 Americans have [irreversible kidney failure](#) and need dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive. More than 100,000 Americans begin dialysis each year. Approximately one in five Americans who start dialysis will die within one year, and more than one-half within five years. Nearly 100,000 Americans are on the waitlist for a kidney transplant right now. Depending on where a patient lives, the average wait time for a kidney transplant can be three to seven years. In 2016, Medicare spent approximately \$114 billion to cover people with kidney disease, representing more than one in five dollars spent by the traditional Medicare program. Learn more about kidney disease and how [HHS is advancing kidney health](#).

About National Kidney Foundation

[The National Kidney Foundation \(NKF\)](#) is the largest, most comprehensive, and longstanding patient-centric organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of kidney disease in the U.S. For more information about NKF visit: www.kidney.org.

About American Society of Nephrology

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 more than 20,000 members representing 131 countries. For more information, please visit www.asn-online.org or contact the society at 202-640-4660.

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