



September 30, 2026

Dear Colleague:

This month, the American Society of Nephrology's (ASN's) efforts to advance policies in kidney care focused on advancing kidney data standards and interoperability, equipping kidney health professionals with evidence-based resources, advocating for a strong and sustainable nephrology workforce, and shaping payment and care delivery policies.

### **1) ASN and HHS Host Data Discovery Workshop and KidneyX EMPOWER Winners Showcase**

ASN partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS's) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology on the final event in the [2026 Kidney Data Discovery Workshop Series](#). The two-part event, a KidneyX EMPOWER Challenge winners' showcase and [Advancing Kidney Data Standards and Interoperability: From Discovery to Action](#), was held on September 10 in Washington, DC. The morning began by featuring the nine winners of the [KidneyX EMPOWER: Living Link Prize Challenge](#) which sought to improve the process of living kidney donation. I encourage you to read more about the winning solutions [here](#) which have the potential to transform the experiences of living kidney donors.

The day closed with the Kidney Data Discovery Workshop, an event dedicated to turning the insights gathered through August's [kidney data interoperability webinars](#) into action. The workshop brought together the community to review gaps and challenges in data exchange, and prioritize critical opportunities to improve kidney data standards and interoperability.

On behalf of ASN, I want to extend my gratitude to all those who participated, as well as to our partners at HHS. For those who were unable to participate, video recordings of both the [KidneyX EMPOWER Prize Winners Showcase](#) and the [Kidney Data Discovery Workshop](#) are online.

### **2) ASN Urges DHS to Consider Exemptions to Proposed H-1B Visa Fee**

ASN [urged the Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#) to exempt health care and biomedical research institutions, H-1B physicians, physician-scientists, and researchers from the agency's proposed rule "Fee for Certain H-1B Petitions". The rule, which would institute a \$103,265 fee for H-1B cap-subject visa petitions, would impose a financial burden on hospitals, research institutions, and other organizations seeking to hire physicians and scientists needed to serve the health and welfare of Americans and advance biomedical research. ASN also joined the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) in [requesting DHS establish a permanent exemption to the proposed rule for physicians](#).

### **3) ASN Endorses CRA Resolution of Disapproval on Visa Status Changes**

ASN's advocacy on workforce- and immigration-related policies also extended to Congress. ASN [endorsed a Congressional Review Act \(CRA\) joint resolution of disapproval](#), regarding a DHS rule. The regulation would eliminate a practice known as "duration of status" that permitted F-1, J-1, and I visa holders to remain in the U.S. while engaging in the activity that qualifies for the visa and capped the admission period at a maximum of four years for F-1 and J-1 visa holders and 240 days for I visa holders. The regulation was temporarily paused by a nationwide preliminary injunction which kept the existing framework in place while litigation continues.

### **4) ASN Shares Vision for Value-Based Care Through LEAD and CARA**

ASN [submitted a letter](#) to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) exploring which elements of the Long-term Enhanced ACO Design (LEAD) Payment Model may be adaptable in a potential new payment model for Medicare beneficiaries with kidney disease. ASN also outlined recommendations to CMMI regarding how the CMS-Administered Risk Arrangements (CARA) Framework within LEAD can be refined to improve kidney care and facilitate direct nephrology participation in value-based care models.

### **5) ASN Submits Feedback on Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule**

ASN [submitted comments](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on the Calendar Year (CY) 2027 Payment Policies Under the Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) proposed rule. ASN offered feedback and recommendations on the: CY2027 PFS Rate Setting and Conversion Factor, E/M Resource Overlap Between Stand-Alone Visits and Global Periods, E/M Visit Complexity Add-On HCPCS Code G2211, Remote Monitoring, and CY2027 Modifications to the Quality Payment Program Reporting and Data Submission. ASN also urged CMS to consider the sustainability of Medicare physician payment at large, especially as physicians face increased financial pressures that threaten the viability of independent practices and the long-term stability of the physician workforce.

### **6) ASN and Kidney Transplant Collaborative (KTC) Urge CMS to Clarify Reimbursement for Living Donor Facilitator Programs**

ASN [encouraged CMS to issue guidance](#) confirming that transplant coordinators who train and support volunteer living donor facilitators may be reimbursed under current Medicare policy on allowable organ acquisition expenses. KTC's Living Donor Program Enhancement Framework, a model that helps transplant centers increase living kidney donations, utilizes coordinators to train volunteer facilitators who help transplant candidates find living donors and support donors throughout the transplant process. Confirmation from CMS that these costs are covered under existing policy will encourage wider adoption of the KTC model.

## **7) ASN Releases eGFR Toolkit 2.0**

This month, ASN launched the [eGFR Toolkit 2.0](#), a new and improved collection of resources and literature to support kidney care professionals in implementing the race-free eGFR equation in the screening, detection, and management of kidney diseases. I encourage you to explore the refreshed toolkit and to share it with colleagues and members of the kidney and primary care communities who may find it useful in their work.

## **8) ASN Awarded 2026 American Society of Association Executives Gold Award**

Lastly, ASN was awarded the [2026 Gold Award by the American Society of Association Executives](#) for *STAND for Kidney Health: Galvanizing the Kidney Community for Policy Change*, a policy framework to unite the kidney community, shift focus toward early intervention, and reform federal policy priorities surrounding kidney diseases and kidney failure. As one of just 22 organizations nationwide recognized, ASN's award underscores the Society's leadership and impact in advancing kidney health for people living with kidney diseases.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to improving outcomes for people living with kidney diseases. ASN looks forward to working together to advance these shared goals in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam M. Parikh".

Samir M. Parikh, MD, FASN  
President