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information regarding our upcoming events or if you'd like to guest author an article for this newsletter.

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Calendar of Events

MAY 14, 2025

RHA Day on the Hill

Washington, DC

The Renal Healthcare Association advocates for dialysis providers and ESRD patients by shaping policy and engaging lawmakers to address key challenges. Save the date for Day on the Hill 2025 on May 14, where kidney care professionals can join us to advance critical advocacy efforts. For more information, please click **here**.

JUNE 9-10, 2025

AMGA 2025 Value Roundtable Summit

Washington, DC

For more information, please click here.

JUNE 11, 2025

AMGA Capitol Hill Day

Washington, DC

For more information, please click here.

AUGUST 12-17, 2025

Nephrology Business Leadership Conference

Plano, TX

For more information, please click here.

SEPTEMBER 17-19, 2025

RHA Annual Conference

Orlando, FL

For more information, please click here.

SEPTEMBER 17-19, 2025

RHA Annual Conference

Orlando, Florida

Disney's Contemporary Resort

The RHA Annual Conference brings together dialysis professionals, industry leaders, and vendors from across the U.S., offering valuable education, expert insights, and networking opportunities to support the entire renal care community. For more information, please click here.

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025

ANNA: 2025 Nephrology Nursing Summit

Charlotte, NC

For more information, please click here.

OCTOBER 2-4, 2025

7th Annual Therapeutic Apheresis **Academy**

UVA Pinn Hall Conference Center Charlottesville, Virginia For more information, please click here.

NOVEMBER 5-9, 2025

ASN: Kidney Week 2025

Houston, TX

(Call for Abstracts Deadline May 21) For more information, please click here.

MARCH 19-21, 2026

2026 OEIS Scientific Meeting

Las Vegas, NV (details to come)

continued on next page





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.

Click **HERE** to register.

A block of guest rooms has been reserved for attendees at the Sheraton Grand for \$299/night + tax. To reserve a room at the negotiated price, please click **HERE** by June 4.

Please contact MEGAN THOMAS, Director of Client Services (mthomas@beneschlaw.com) for more information about this event as well as exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities.

If your organization is interested in Exhibitor Hall opportunities, please click **HERE**.

*No CME or CLE available.

AGENDA

8:00-8:45

Registration and Breakfast in Exhibitor Hall

8:45-9:00

Opening Remarks

SCOTT DOWNING AND JASON GREIS, Partners, Benesch Healthcare+

9:00-9:30

Keynote Address

KEITH BELLOVICH, D.O., President, Renal Physicians Association

9:30-10:15

Healthcare Private Equity Investment: Happy Days or Headwinds

Moderator:

JASON GREIS, Partner, Benesch Healthcare+ Presenters:

SCOTT KREMEIER, Managing Director, *Piper Sandler* DOUG SIMPSON, President, *Panoramic Health* ROBERT PROVENZANO, MD, CEO, *Innocura*

10:15-10:30 Break

(continued on next page)



AGENDA

Benesch Healthcare+ Fifth Annual Nephrology and Dialysis Conference

10:30-11:15

Research Opportunities in Nephrology and Dialysis

Moderator:

LAURI COOPER, Counsel, Benesch Healthcare+

Presenters:

JAN WALTER, President, Frenova

BERNARD V. FISCHBACH, MD, CCRP, Dallas Nephrology
Associates

NANCY CIPPARRONE, Director of Research, Nephrology Associates of Northern Illinois and Indiana

11:15-12:00

The Future of Kidney Transplantation

Moderator:

JAKE CILEK, Partner, Benesch Healthcare+

Presenters:

MICHAEL A. REES, M.D., PhD., UToledo Health

MICHELLE A. JOSEPHSON, M.D., University of Chicago Medicine Transplant Institute

HARRY E. WILKINS, III, MD, MHCM, President & CEO, Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network

SUNEEL UDANI, M.D., Nephrology Associates of Northern Illinois and Indiana

12:00-1:30 Lunch

1:30-2:15

Artificial Intelligence in Medicine

Moderator:

NICK ADAMSON, Associate, *Benesch Healthcare+* Presenters:

GILBERT VILLAFOR, Partner, Benesch

HOWARD SHAPS, MD MBA, Chief Medical Officer, Healthmap Solutions

SARAVAN BALAMUTHUSAMY, Founder, *OptMyCare* KATHRIN ZAKI, Managing Associate, *Benesch*

2:15-3:00

As the Dust Settles on Current VBC Models, What Comes Next?

Moderator:

NESKO RADOVIC, Senior Managing Associate, *Benesch Healthcare*+

Presenters:

PHIL SARNOWSKI, Senior Vice President, Business Transformation, U.S. Renal Care

BASSEM MIKHAEL, M.D., Deputy Chief Medical Officer, *Somatus*

Representative from Monogram Health

ERICA MALTBY, Regional President, *Strive Health* TIMOTHY PFLEDERER, M.D., Chief Medical Officer,

Evergreen Nephrology

3:00-3:15 Break

3:15-4:15

Innovative Kidney Care Companies to Know

Moderator:

CHRIS DEGRANDE, Partner, Benesch Healthcare+ Companies:

Neway Labs—BRYAN THOMPSON, Chief Executive Officer Laminate Medical—ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, PhD., VP Market Access

Vivance—MANDAR GORI, Chief Business Officer
VenoStent—TIMOTHY BOIRE, Chief Executive Officer
Phraxis—ALEX YEVLIN, Chief Executive Officer
Mozarc Medical—MIKE SERLE, Senior Director, Global
Medical & Clinical Affairs

4:15-5:00

An Update on Federal and State Laws to Regulate Non-Compete Covenants

J. SCOTT HUMPHREY, Partner, Benesch

5:00–6:30 Cocktail Reception





Exhibitor and Sponsorship Opportunities

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

Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:00 A.M. -5:00 P.M. Cocktail reception to follow

The Sheraton Grand Riverwalk Chicago

301 East North Water Street | Chicago

Conference Registration\$250

Please register and pay **HERE**.

Break Sponsorships......\$2000 (two slots)

- Logo
- Spotlight
- 4 free registrations
- List of attendees week before

To purchase a break sponsorship, please register and pay **HERE**.

Exhibitor Space.....\$1000

- Logo
- Overview of company within handout
- 2 free conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

To purchase an exhibitor table, please register and pay HERE.

Breakfast Sponsor\$3500

- Logo
- Spotlight with free plug
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

To purchase a breakfast sponsorship, please register and pay **HERE**.

Lunch Sponsor \$4000

- Logo
- Spotlight with free plug
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

To purchase a lunch sponsorship, please register and pay **HERE**.

Cocktail Reception Sponsor.....\$6000

- Spotlight with free plug
- Decorate space with signage
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

To purchase a cocktail reception sponsorship, please register and pay HERE.

For more information or to sign up for an exhibitor space or sponsorship, please contact:

MEGAN THOMAS Director of Client Services mthomas@beneschlaw.com

Nephrology and Dialysis

APRIL 14, 2025

DOJ scores first victory in criminal antitrust labor market trial

A federal jury convicted a former home healthcare staffing executive in Las Vegas for orchestrating a three-year wage-fixing conspiracy targeting registered and licensed practical nurses. Between 2016 and 2019, the man and co-conspirators unlawfully suppressed nurses' wages by coordinating pay rates among competing agencies. Additionally, he concealed an ongoing federal antitrust investigation during the sale of his staffing company for over \$10 million, failing to disclose the criminal probe to the buyer. The convicted man faces potential penalties under the Sherman Act, including up to 10 years in prison and a \$1-million fine.

Related: DOJ defends wage-fixing jury win from mistrial bid—Law 360 (sub. rec.)

SOURCE: Department of Justice

APRIL 3, 2025

NLRB judge finds Satellite Healthcare violated federal law by retaliating against workers involved in union organizing

A National Labor Relations Board judge found Satellite Healthcare violated federal labor laws by withholding raises, firing a nurse involved in organizing and implicitly threatening to close a clinic if workers unionized. As a result, Satellite was ordered to reinstate the nurse with back pay, compensate affected employees and cease its unlawful conduct. The decision stems from charges filed by SEIU-UHW, which successfully organized seven of Satellite's clinics during a major push to unionize the dialysis industry. Despite Satellite's claims that its actions were legal and unrelated to union activity, the judge concluded the company's conduct was retaliatory and violated workers' rights.

Related: California dialysis provider must stop threatening union workers, judge orders— HR Dive

SOURCE: Law 360 (sub. rec.)

APRIL 17, 2025

DaVita claims patient care unaffected by ransomware attack

DaVita was targeted by a ransomware attack that encrypted parts of its network. The company activated backup systems and manual processes to ensure patient care continues without disruption. The full impact of the attack is unknown and third-party cybersecurity experts are working to restore systems. Ransomware attacks have become a common threat in the healthcare sector, with two-thirds of healthcare organizations reporting such incidents, including Fresenius Medical Care in 2023.

SOURCE: MedTech Dive



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 21, 2025

Fresenius Medical Care says advanced hemodialysis system set for commercial launch in 2026

Fresenius Medical Care will introduce the 5008X Hemodialysis System at its U.S. clinics next year, noting high-volume hemodiafiltration is already used in Europe, Latin America and Asia-Pacific. The system, which combines diffusion and convection to clear mid-sized molecules, received FDA approval in 2024. A study in the New England Journal of Medicine confirmed its benefits in improving patient survival and quality of life.

SOURCE: Modern Healthcare (sub. rec.)

APRIL 1, 2025

Fresenius Medical Care secures \$1.25B in corporate funding via bond placements

Denominated in euros, the company applied to have the bonds listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange. The issuances are in two tranches of approximately \$683 million and \$569 million each, with the former maturing in 2028 and the latter in 2032. Fresenius states bond proceeds will be for general purposes, including refinancing existing liabilities.

SOURCE: Fresenius Medical Care

APRIL 8, 2025

Interwell CEO says success in value-based kidney care requires comprehensive approach

Interwell was formed from the merger of Interwell, Cricket Health and Fresenius Health Partners. Despite the complexities of merging three companies, Robert Sepucha says shared values and a common mission to improve patient care smoothed the transition. He states value-based kidney care is still evolving, but after the initial investor hype, the focus is shifting to performance, with payers seeking partners who can deliver comprehensive, cost-effective outcomes and not just narrow solutions like home visits or data analytics. Sepucha adds the federal government's involvement in dialysis care will be a challenge as policy directions under the Trump administration are uncertain. However, Interwell is optimistic of continued bipartisan support for value-based care, noting there's strong alignment across political lines on the need for greater clinical and financial accountability in managing high-cost chronic conditions like kidney disease.

SOURCE: Modern Healthcare (sub. rec.)



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 17, 2025

Strive Health expands executive team by naming President, COO

The value-based kidney care company headquartered in Denver named Paul Marchetti as president. He has considerable experience in healthcare, having previously worked for UnitedHealth Group, Aetna, Evolent and Anthem. Marchetti was most recently president of Elevance Health's pharmacy business. Strive Health also promoted Jen Browne to Chief Operating Officer. She joined the company in 2023 as President of Market Operations and Population Health after filling executive roles Optum and DaVita.

SOURCE: Strive Health

APRIL 25, 2025

Kidney care company spun off from Baxter earlier this year establishes headquarters in Deerfield

Vantive, a kidney care company that was spun off from Baxter International earlier this year, will establish its headquarters in Deerfield. Vantive, which formerly operated as Baxter's Kidney Care segment, will invest \$23 million in the headquarters site at 510 Lake Cook Road. Equipment manufacturer Caterpillar formerly occupied the site. The new headquarters will allow Vantive to expand its facilities and pharmacy operations, creating at least 50 new fulltime jobs, according to a news release.

SOURCE: Chicago Tribune

MARCH 31, 2025

Dallas Nephrology Associates recognized for value-based kidney care model at national trade association event

Dallas Nephrology Associates (DNA) was honored as a 2025 Acclaim Award Honoree by the American Medical Group Association for its leadership in value-based kidney care. The award recognizes organizations advancing the Quadruple Aim: improving patient care, enhancing population health, reducing costs and promoting provider well-being. DNA's patient-centered model emphasizes early intervention, education and collaborative treatment plans, resulting in improved outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

SOURCE: Dallas Nephrology Associates



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 8, 2025

CMS says 2026 rates include higher-than-expected MA payments, phase-in of risk adjustment model changes

The 2026 Rate Announcement for Medicare Advantage (MA) and Medicare Part D programs indicates a 5.06% increase in payments, amounting to an additional \$25 billion in federal funding for MA plans. This increase is attributed to a higher MA growth rate of 9.04%, compared to the previously estimated 5.93%. The announcement also finalizes changes to the MA risk adjustment model, including a reduction in diagnosis codes and the removal of medical education costs from growth rate calculations. These changes aim to protect beneficiaries and taxpayers from fraud, waste, and abuse, despite criticism from payers regarding the risk adjustment modifications.

SOURCE: Tech Target

APRIL 10, 2025

Bipartisan bill reintroduced in Congress to spur organ donations via tax credit

The End Kidney Deaths Act, reintroduced by Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R.-NY) and Rep. Josh Harder (D.-CA), aims to incentivize organ donation by offering a \$50,000 tax credit to kidney donors. The legislation's aim is to significantly reduce the number of Americans dying from kidney failure and alleviate the financial burden on Medicare by decreasing the need for costly dialysis treatments. However, the act's fixed payment may limit higher compensation opportunities for donors.

SOURCE: Rep. Nicole Malliotakis



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 9, 2025

Health policy & management experts examine ways regulations distort dialysis care, inflate prices

Dr. Eugene Lin and Dr. Erin Trish of USC and Dr. Ge Bai of Johns Hopkins point to three ways in which government regulations are detrimental to delivering kidney care that provides better health outcomes at a lower cost:

- 1. Medicare's requirement that MA plans certify their provider networks are adequate transfer negotiating power to providers and weaken plans' ability to negotiate lower prices;
- 2. CMS programs like the Quality Incentive Program and Dialysis Facility Care Compare are confusing and onerous, with overlapping or conflicting measures; and
- 3. The regulatory environment for payment and quality oversight favors large incumbents and competition is further stifled by entry costs tied to regulatory regimes.

They prescribe that policymakers simplify regulations to promote fair competition and focus on high-value care, while eliminating anticompetitive practices and unnecessary barriers for new entrants. Positive steps, like CMS' waivers under the Kidney Care Choices Model, show how regulatory flexibility can foster innovation and improve care delivery.

SOURCE: Health Affairs

MARCH 31, 2025

AKF, MAVEN Project launch initiative to enhance kidney care through volunteer-led telehealth service

The American Kidney Fund (AKF) and the MAVEN Project say the educational program addresses the shortage of nephrologists by providing underserved communities with access to specialized medical guidance. The program focuses on empowering primary care providers with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage kidney disease effectively. By leveraging the expertise of volunteer nephrologists, the initiative aims to improve early detection and management of chronic kidney disease in at-risk populations.

SOURCE: American Kidney Fund



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 14, 2025

USC study finds racial disparities in accessing high-quality dialysis clinics

The research highlights the impact of care continuity with predialysis nephrologists on dialysis start quality for end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) patients, revealing racial disparities in care. The study suggests most ESKD patients begin dialysis at their nephrologists' primary facility, even if it has a low rating from the CMS' Dialysis Facility Compare Star Program. Black patients were more likely to receive care from nephrologists with low-quality facilities, resulting in lower quality dialysis care. The research underscores the need for transparency in facility quality and the importance of addressing racial disparities in dialysis care.

SOURCE: HCP Live

APRIL 19, 2025

Analysis finds CKD screening, SGLT2 inhibitors, reduce kidney failure incidence in all U.S. racial, ethnic groups

Analysis conducted by Stanford University recommends initiating chronic kidney disease (CKD) screening at age 55, combined with SGLT2 inhibitor treatment, to reduce kidney failure incidence and improve life expectancy across all racial and ethnic groups. The greatest benefits were observed among non-Hispanic Black adults, who have the highest projected lifetime incidence of kidney failure. Screening every five years from ages 55 to 75 was deemed cost-effective overall, with the lowest cost per quality-adjusted life year gained among non-Hispanic Black adults. Earlier screening at ages 45 or 35 yielded even greater health gains and helped narrow life expectancy disparities but was generally not cost-effective except for non-Hispanic Black adults.

SOURCE: AJMC



Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

APRIL 22, 2025

Study: Integrated care reduces hospital admissions, ED visits for **CKD** patients

A Mayo Clinic study suggests implementing an interdisciplinary care model for managing chronic kidney disease (CKD) led to a 26% reduction in hospital admissions and a 30% decrease in emergency department (ED) visits. The research highlights the effectiveness of coordinated care, patient education and shared decision-making in outpatient settings. The study noted the majority of patients were white males with significant renal impairment, with most patients experiencing modest progression in CKD stages.

SOURCE: AJMC

APRIL 16, 2025

Clinicians call xenotransplant of kidney success despite removal after four months

A genetically modified pig's kidney was removed from an AL woman after 130 days, marking the longest duration for such a transplant. The woman resumed dialysis. Dr. Robert Montgomery of NYU Langone Health doesn't consider the patient's rejection of the organ a setback, saying incremental improvements are key. Despite the outcome, the patient was grateful for the time spent off dialysis and acknowledged the scientific learning gained from their experience.

SOURCE: Physicians Weekly

APRIL 14, 2025

Canadian researchers develop diagnostic tool to test kidney function

Researchers at the University of Manitoba unveiled the uCR-Chip, a portable diagnostic technology which delivers results in under seven minutes without requiring advanced lab equipment. The aim is to improve early detection and health outcomes for individuals with chronic kidney disease, particularly in underserved and remote communities. Early diagnosis is crucial as kidney disease often goes undiagnosed until advanced stages, impacting quality of life and increasing healthcare costs related to dialysis and transplantation.

SOURCE: Medical Xpress



VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs

APRIL 10, 2025

CMS may restrict reimbursement of skin substitutes as providers take advantage of Medicare loophole

Medicare spending on skin substitutes - thin, expensive bandages made from placental tissue - surged to over \$10 billion last year, more than double 2023's figure. This increase is driven by a loophole in reimbursement rules allow healthcare providers to set high initial prices for new products, which are reimbursed at those rates for six months before adjusting to actual purchase prices. Doctors often receive steep discounts on these products and then bill Medicare at the full price, profiting from the difference. Consequently, patients are undergoing costly treatments unnecessarily, leading to what experts describe as one of the largest examples of Medicare waste in history. In response, CMS is proposing local coverage determinations that would restrict reimbursement for skin substitutes to cases with robust clinical evidence. However, the implementation of the policy is delayed, with the Trump Administration postponing them until at least 2026, citing the need for further review.

SOURCE: The New York Times (sub. rec.)

APRIL 4, 2025

Court approves \$3.15M settlement in Azura Vascular Care data breach case

Azura Vascular Care reported a data breach early last year affecting approximately 348,000 patients. The incident involved unauthorized access to systems containing sensitive patient information, including Social Security numbers, medical records and insurance details. A proposed class action lawsuit was filed against Azura, alleging inadequate cybersecurity practices and delayed notification to affected individuals. Under terms of a court-approved settlement, a \$3.15-million fund will be created to cover claims from class members, attorneys' fees, service awards for class representatives and legal costs and expenses. Individuals sent a notification they were affected by the data breach may submit a claim for reimbursement up to a maximum of \$10,000.

SOURCE: ClassAction.org



VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs (cont'd)

APRIL 3, 2025

American Vascular Associates appoints Rick Prall as CDO

Rick Prall has a lengthy background in healthcare companies, with prior stints at GE Medical Systems, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Johnson & Johnson and Toshiba. As Chief Development Officer at American Vascular Associates, he'll be responsible for market development, physician partnerships and strategic expansion initiatives in the vascular care sector nationwide.

SOURCE: American Vascular Associates

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

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