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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

APRIL 9-13, 2025

## **National Kidney Foundation Spring Clinical Meetings**

Boston, MA

For more information, please click here.

APRIL 23-24, 2025 | VIRTUAL

## **RHA Virtual Spring Meeting**

## **Empowering Solutions: Current Trends &** Challenges in Dialysis

Join us for an impactful event where dialysis providers address key challenges in renal healthcare. Designed for all levels of experience, this meeting offers practical insights to advance your dialysis services. For more information, please click here.

APRIL 25-27, 2025

### 2025 AAP/ASCI/APSA Joint Meeting

Chicago, IL

For more information, please click here.

APRIL 30, 2025

## 2025 AXS CME Symposium - Best **Practices for Managing Hyperkalemia in Patients with Heart Failure and Chronic Kidney Disease**

Las Vegas, NV

For more information, please click here.

APRIL 30, 2025 | WEBINAR

## **Learnings for Payers from the Government's Value-Based Kidney Care Program**

Presented by Interwell Health

For more information, please click here.

MAY 1-3, 2025

### 2025 OEIS Scientific Meeting

Orlando, FL

For more information, please click here.

MAY 1-4, 2025

### **ANNA National Symposium**

Portland, OR

For more information, please click here.

MAY 6-7, 2025

### **3rd Annual CMA Hit Summit**

San Diego, CA

For more information, please click here.

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.

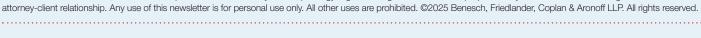
AUGUST 12-17, 2025

## **Nephrology Business Leadership** Conference

Plano, TX

For more information, please click here.

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# Calendar of Events (cont'd)

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.

NOVEMBER 5-9, 2025

### **ASN Kidney Week 2025**

Houston, TX

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 (<a href="mailto:mthomas@beneschlaw.com">mthomas@beneschlaw.com</a>) 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* 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

#### 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:

ALEX PORTET, Chief Operating Officer, Value-Based Care, 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**

MARCH 12, 2025

## ESRD ETC among value-based care models being ended early by CMS

This decision to end the ESRD ETC payment model and several others on Dec. 31 aligns with CMS' goal to focus on models that demonstrate potential for expansion. The ESRD Treatment Choices model, designed to encourage at-home dialysis and kidney transplants, hasn't shown significant improvements in health outcomes or reductions in Medicare spending, according to HHS Director, Robert Kennedy. CMS estimates ending the payment models will save taxpayers nearly \$750 million. The agency will continue to evaluate its remaining models, making adjustments as necessary to enhance care quality and cost-effectiveness.

**SOURCE: Axios** 

MARCH 20, 2025

# CMA: 2025 federal budget offers no remedy to Medicare physician payment cut

The California Medical Association (CMA) condemned Congress for failing to prevent a 2.8% Medicare physician payment cut in the federal budget, continuing a five-year trend of reductions. For the CMA, the cuts don't account for medical practice inflation and effectively represent a 6.3% reduction, worsening the financial strain on physicians. The CMA claims the trend is causing significant disruptions to rural and small practices, forcing many physicians into early retirement or limiting the number of Medicare patients they see. It adds Medicare beneficiaries are facing longer wait times and limited access to primary care and specialists.

**SOURCE: California Medical Association** 

MARCH 17, 2025

# MedPAC recommending Congress tie Medicare payments to physicians to inflation rate

MedPAC recommends Congress adjust Medicare physician payments for 2026 by linking them to the Medicare Economic Index (MEI) minus one percentage point. The MEI measures changes in physicians' operating costs and the adjustment would better align payments with inflation. Additionally, MedPAC suggests implementing safety-net add-on payments for services provided to low-income Medicare beneficiaries, proposing a 15% increase for primary care physicians and other clinicians and a 5% increase for specialists. These changes are estimated to cost between \$2 billion and \$5 billion in the first year, potentially reaching \$25 billion over five years. While the recommendations aim to enhance physician reimbursement, some provider groups argue the proposed increases may be insufficient to address ongoing financial challenges.

SOURCE: Healthcare Dive



# **Nephrology and Dialysis** (cont'd)

MARCH 24, 2025

# KCP praising reintroduction of House bill to protect coverage choices for dialysis patients

Kidney Care Partners (KCP) says the bipartisan bill would restore protections originally provided under the Medicare Secondary Payer Act (MSPA) to dialysis patients, ensuring they can stay on private insurance for 30 months before transitioning to Medicare. The reintroduction follows a Supreme Court decision disrupting those protections, forcing some patients off their private insurance plans prematurely. The legislation seeks to close this gap, ensuring individuals with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) continue to receive uninterrupted care. Kidney care advocates, including the KCP, stress the importance of the legislation in safeguarding life-sustaining treatments and improving patient care for those affected by kidney failure.

**SOURCE: Kidney Care Partners** 

MARCH 23, 2025

## Kidney transplant specialist at Brown University deported to Lebanon

Dr. Rasha Alawieh, who also taught at the Ivy League school in Providence, RI, was detained at Boston's Logan International Airport upon returning to the U.S. after a visit to her homeland of Lebanon. CBP officials seized her phone and there are reports it had photos of leading figures of Hezbollah, considered a terrorist group by the U.S. government. Her H-1B visa allowing the specialist to remain in the U.S. was revoked and she was sent back to Lebanon. At Brown Medicine's Division of Kidney Disease & Hypertension where she worked, Dr. George Bayliss, the organ transplant division's medical director, calls the situation outrageous. He says Alawieh "is a person who is legally entitled to be in the U.S., who is stopped from re-entering the country for reasons no one knows. It's depriving her patients of a good physician."

SOURCE: Arab News



# **Nephrology and Dialysis** (cont'd)

MARCH 18, 2025

# Federal court rules in favor of Fresenius is lawsuit over dialysis product

Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) successfully defended itself against a lawsuit from MSP Recovery regarding alleged injuries related to the dialysis product GranuFlo. The First Circuit Court <u>ruled</u> MSP's 2018 lawsuit was barred by time limitations that began in 2012 when Fresenius disclosed potential heart problems associated with GranuFlo. The decision upholds a lower court's dismissal of MSP's claims of negligence against FMC.

SOURCE: Bloomberg Law (sub. rec.)

MARCH 13, 2025

# FMC highlights progress in three-year transformation journey in annual report

Fresenius Medical Care's (FMC) 2024 Annual Report and Sustainability Statement, claiming 4% organic revenue growth and an 18% operating income increase. The company maintained a high global patient Net Promoter Score of 72, conducted 22 clinical studies and published 165 scientific research documents. Environmental initiatives led to a 25% reduction in Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions compared to 2020, while over 100 energy efficiency opportunities were identified at production sites. Financially, FME reduced debt, increased dividends and positioned itself for enhanced earnings growth in 2025.

SOURCE: Fresenius Medical Care

MARCH 7, 2025

## Stock price for FMC's parent rebounding following stake sale to Quest

Fresenius SE raised nearly \$1.2 billion through a strategic sale of shares in Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) and the issuance of exchangeable bonds linked to the dialysis firm. The sale generated approximately \$508 million, with the rest from three-year zero-coupon exchangeable bonds. This moves are part of Fresenius' restructuring efforts under CEO Michael Sen, aiming for a leaner and more profitable structure. Despite the divestment, Fresenius SE remains the largest shareholder, retaining at 25% plus one share in FMC. The strategy is to capitalize on stock price gains, enhance financial flexibility and strengthen core businesses.

**SOURCE: Trading View** 



# **Nephrology and Dialysis** (cont'd)

MARCH 7, 2025

# Brazilian antitrust agency will scrutinize DaVita's proposed acquisition of Fresenius' dialysis business

The Brazilian antitrust authority, CADE, is reviewing DaVita's acquisition of Brasnefro due to concerns over market concentration in dialysis services. DaVita, a subsidiary of the U.S.based DaVita Inc., and Brasnefro, part of the Fresenius Medical Care Group, both provide dialysis services across Brazil. While the deal doesn't raise competition concerns in the acute dialysis market, it does in the chronic dialysis sector, where both companies dominate several local markets. Nine of the 10 markets analyzed for chronic dialysis services have high concentration and limited competition. CADE submitted the case to its Tribunal for further analysis and a final decision.

**SOURCE: Government of Brazil** 

### FEBRUARY 25, 2025

# DaVita exec says technology holds potential to transform specialty care landscape for patients with chronic conditions

Joel Haugen, chief product officer for DaVita, points out people with chronic conditions interact significantly more with specialists than primary care physicians, leading to fragmented care. This contributes to inefficiencies, poor patient outcomes and increased healthcare costs, with over 90% of medical spending in specialty care. However, Haugen states advancements such as telehealth and integrated care management tools, have the potential to transform patient engagement and the specialty care landscape. He explains DaVita's mobile app, DaVita Care Connect, enhances patient engagement by providing telehealth visits, appointment reminders, secure messaging, lab results and educational resources. Haugen stresses the importance of creating solutions that prioritize patient and care team experiences, advocating for collaboration among stakeholders to optimize healthcare delivery and reduce fragmentation.

SOURCE: Becker's Hospital Review



# **Nephrology and Dialysis** (cont'd)

MARCH 11, 2025

## Strive Health expands value-based care network with Zing Health deal

Strive Health expanded its partnership with Zing Health, an MA insurer, to provide specialized kidney care to eligible members in OH, TN and MS, while continuing coverage in IL, IN and MI. The expansion brings thousands of Zing members with CKD and ESKD under the Strive umbrella, with significant growth expected this year. Strive Health collaborates with commercial and MA payors, Medicare, health systems and physicians to improve patient outcomes and reduce costs through risk-based payment models. The company supports over 121,000 CKD and ESKD patients in all 50 states and works with more than 6,500 providers.

SOURCE: Strive Health

MARCH 4, 2025

# Health insurance consultant claims flat-fee approach to dialysis claims results in cost savings

MD-based H.H.C. Group explains a case study demonstrated how its reference-based pricing model saved a healthcare plan 90% on a high-cost ESRD dialysis claim, cutting costs from over \$833,000 to just \$43,200. Unlike competitors who charge a percentage of savings, H.H.C.'s flat-fee structure provide additional savings directly to payors, totaling \$750,524.79 in net savings in the case study. The model's fixed rate of \$300 per treatment contrasts with traditional pricing models that can lead to higher fees for intermediary services. With over 550,000 U.S. patients requiring dialysis annually, H.H.C.'s claims its model is a sustainable way to manage dialysis expenses while protecting patients from balance billing.

SOURCE: H.H.C. Group

MARCH 17, 2025

# FL nephrology practice establishes foundation to improve care access, support systems for kidney patients

National Kidney Partners established a foundation in its name focused on improving support systems for kidney patients across the state through advocacy, resources and community engagement. With the guidance of a specialized medical team, the NKP Foundation aims to address gaps in kidney care and help patients navigate their treatment plans. Carly Hamid was appointed the foundation's Executive Director. Hamid, a kidney transplant recipient with experience in dialysis, plans to enhance access to care, expand resources and build a robust community for kidney patients.

**SOURCE: National Kidney Partners Foundation** 



## **Nephrology and Dialysis** (cont'd)

MARCH 11, 2025

# ASN: Organ allocation issues can be mitigated through holistic, long-term approach

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) notes over 1,200 people on transplant waitlists died in the past five years due to allocation issues such as organs being discarded, allocated out of sequence or declined. The ASN recommends the following policy changes to make the process not only fairer and equitable but also increase the number of organs donated:

- Initiate work on a long-term fundamental overhaul of the allocation system and optimize the matching system;
- Enforce existing OPTN allocation rules;
- Increase transparency for kidney patients (and nephrologists) by including retrospective sharing of organs declined on patients' behalf with the patients and the care team;
- Expedite the CMS release of an organ procurement organization rule that addresses concerns with tiering, methodology and plans for procurement service in communities following decertification of organ procurement organizations;
- Align goals and incentives for OPOs with those of the transplant centers to facilitate timely, fair and transparent matching of organs to recipients;
- Provide feedback to programs that declined organs regarding whether or not those organs were successfully transplanted elsewhere; and
- Develop and expand the use of clinical decision support tools for transplant professionals who make organ offer decisions.

SOURCE: American Society of Nephrology

### MARCH 12, 2025

## ASN issues guidance for managing patients with AKI-D focused on individualized care

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) says for patients with acute kidney injury requiring dialysis (AKI-D), practices should focus on individualizing care to promote recovery and minimize complications. The guidance reminds clinicians AKI-D differs from ESKD, with recovery being a key goal, especially for patients with minimal comorbidities and good kidney function prior to injury. Monitoring is critical, with specific recommendations based on the patient's likelihood of recovery, ranging from 30 to 90 days post-dialysis. Clinicians are advised to optimize dialysis prescriptions to minimize harm, such as hypotension and dialytrauma and to monitor recovery indicators like urine output and creatinine levels. Overall, ASN stresses that the treatment approach should be flexible and responsive to the patient's changing needs.

SOURCE: Renal + Urology News



# Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

MARCH 7, 2025

# Intermountain Health: Understanding KRS enable patients to proactively address kidney issues

The UT-based health system stresses the importance of patients knowing their Kidney Risk Score (KRS). The KRS is a simple blood and urine test that estimates an individual's risk of kidney failure over the next five years, aiding early detection and intervention. Risk factors for chronic kidney disease include diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, smoking and a family history of kidney disease. Intermountain says individuals with a KRS higher than 5% are advised to consult a nephrologist for personalized kidney health guidance.

SOURCE: Intermountain Health

APRIL 2, 2025

# New enforcement chief raises questions about how HHS will handle billions in claims, appeals

The assistant secretary for enforcement at HHS will oversee the Departmental Appeals Board, the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals and the Office of Civil Rights to address waste, fraud and abuse, though it's unclear if the offices will be merged or remain separate. Industry experts are concerned that having agencies report to a political appointee could compromise their independence. Healthcare attorneys warn that consolidating departments handling appeals could slow the dispute resolution process, leading to backlogs and delays in filing lawsuits against the federal government. An expert on regulatory policy at Epstein Becker Green, Robert Wanerman, says the main concern for the Office of Civil Rights is whether it will have sufficient staff to conduct investigations and enforce actions and whether it'll maintain its regulatory authority or shift to an oversight role.

SOURCE: Modern Healthcare (sub. rec.)



# VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs

MARCH 20, 2025

## FDA issues new recall of Bard atherectomy catheter system

The FDA issued a Class I recall for multiple models of Bard Peripheral Vascular's Rotarex Atherectomy System, due to the risk of the device's helix breaking during use. The malfunction can lead to severe complications, including vessel injury, bleeding or death, with 115 incidents requiring additional intervention, 30 serious injuries and four deaths reported. Despite the recall, the devices aren't being removed from the market, but clinicians are required to follow updated instructions for use to prevent complications. The instructions provide specific guidelines on catheter usage, including avoiding certain vessel conditions and ensuring adequate blood flow to reduce overheating.

SOURCE: FDA

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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