

3. Goal 1 - E. Focused Quality Assurance Activities

As a complement to the quality improvement initiatives of The Renal Network, focused interventions were conducted to provide more direct contact between the Network and facilities failing to meet Network goals.

1. Fistula First.

A focused intervention process was included in Fistula First activities. As described in section 3.D.1. A sample, based on a population of 100 patients or more, of facilities with <40% fistulae and ≥30% catheters (“sub-standard” facilities) in May 2006 were targeted for intervention (Network 9 Non-LDO n = 8, Network 10 Non-LDO n = 6). Facilities were contacted by telephone in September 2006 and surveyed on specific processes based on the Fistula First 11 Change Concepts. Discussions included tools and resources that are offered by the Network that can assist the facilities in improving their outcomes. A chart evaluating the outcome of this focused intervention is found on page 29.

2. Facility Intervention Profiling System.

Using data routinely reported to the Network, the MRB reinstated the Facility Intervention Profiling System. This system incorporates all aspects of the data into an analysis of quality of care. The facility profiling process is designed to identify facility outliers in order to assist in improving quality of care. The process assigns weighted points to quality indicators, based on the indicator’s importance to patient care. Data used for the profile includes the fourth quarter sample provided by the lab data collection, data from CMS Form 2728 on initiation of dialysis, SMR and SHR, vascular access data, grievance, and compliance with Network reporting requirements.

Point levels & actions included:

- No points: notification of job well done
- 1 – 9 points: notification of points received, no response required.
- 10 to 39 points: facility internal review requested.
- 40 to 49 points: MRB required facility review and action plan submitted to the Network.
- Greater than 50 points: MRB required facility review, action plans, and site visit if no improvement is achieved by the facility.

The Network will intervene with any facility acquiring a total of 40 or more points. Any facility acquiring more than 40 points for three consecutive years will be subject to a site visit.

During 2006, this system was developed and tested. Each facility received an explanation of the plan along with its own points total. This activity was just informational as the data used for the first intervention were not actionable due to the age of the data. Full implementation will begin in 2007 using the current data.

3. Grievance Process.

Most activities related to the Network grievance process provide direct and focused intervention between the Network and the dialysis provider. When a complaint is filed, the Network contacts the provider to discuss the issue, and help resolve the complaint between the patients and the dialysis provider.

If a grievance is filed, the provider is contacted with a request for information regarding the grievance. Compliance is mandatory. If a grievance is substantiated, a plan of correction is requested from the facility. This plan is reviewed and accepted by the MRB, and monitored until the grievance is deemed to be resolved. Complete details on the Network grievance process can be found in Goal 3, beginning on page 50.