

E. Network Special Projects/Studies

1. Quality Improvement Projects – Hemodialysis Adequacy QIP

Twenty-six hemodialysis facilities were identified as being sub-standard performers related to adequacy as demonstrated by having percent patients with URR at least two standard deviations (72%) below the Network mean (88.4%).

The following facility improvement plan was approved by the MRB in October 2007 and was implemented:

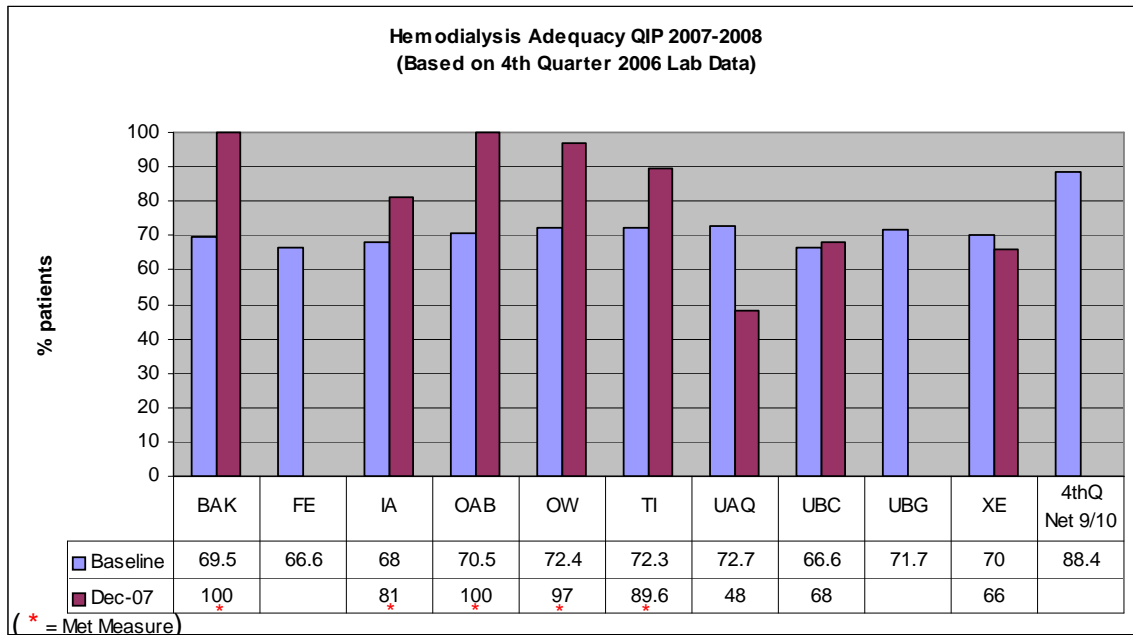
Targeted facilities were contacted in October 2007 to determine their September 2007 percent patients with URR (most current data at that time). Sixteen of the facilities demonstrated improvement at or above the two standard deviations (72%) of the Network mean since the 4th quarter 2006 data. Ten of the facilities are being monitored quarterly for improvement.

Patient education brochures related to adequacy of dialysis were sent to all 26 facilities in September 2007. Each facility was told they could request more brochures if they needed them to assist in educating their patients.

Facility nurse managers were contacted by phone in November and December 2007 and offered one on one technical assistance. Discussion was conducted concerning the facility process and/or policy followed to ensure adequate dialysis.

Facilities will continue to be contacted quarterly to determine outcome improvement. The following chart displays the individual targeted facility outcomes for December 2007.

Chart 3.Goal 1.E-1.



The goal of this project is for targeted facilities to increase their URR percentage rate to meet Network 9/10s 2006 4th quarter rate of 88.4% by September 2008.

2. Quality Improvement Project – Transplant Referral

In 2005, The Renal Network coordinated a special study to look at barriers for patients in being placed on the transplant waiting list. In this study, a Technical Expert Panel (TEP) examined barriers to transplantation and developed suggested clinical performance measures to assess a patient’s progress to gain placement on the transplant waiting list.

In 2007, using the information which was developed by this TEP, The Renal Network began developing a project with volunteer dialysis facilities and transplantation centers in Cleveland, Ohio.

The goal of this project is to increase the timeliness of transplant referral for eligible patients by determining where patients have difficulty in completing the process for transplant work-up. This project aims to develop a process to enhance communications between dialysis centers and transplant centers with the ultimate goal of improving the rate of transplant referral.

During 2007 representatives of three dialysis facilities and a transplant center in Cleveland met to identify data collection elements that would enable the dialysis facilities to calculate the proposed transplant referral CPMs as well as identify

barriers to transplant referral. Network staff worked with these facility representatives to develop a data collection process and structure. The process was tested in the fall of 2007 and changes were recommended by the dialysis facility representatives. The changes were completed by December 2007 and the project is scheduled to launch in January 2008.

Baseline data will be collected in January 2008 from the dialysis providers on transplant referral rates. The volunteer transplant centers in Cleveland have provided the dialysis facilities with a list of exclusions and will update the dialysis providers with information which shows the dialysis providers where the patients are in completing the transplant referral process. Data will be collected throughout the project and will be evaluated to determine and demonstrate whether this newly described process will enhance communication and assist in increasing transplant referral. The goal of this project is to improve the rate of referral for transplant evaluation by 2% in the first year.

Dialysis facilities and transplant centers in Indianapolis, Indiana will be added to the project in 2008.