



**The Centers For Dialysis Care  
Shaker Heights, Ohio**

**Contact Information**

Medical Director

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**Category:** Adherence To Procedures

**Type of Facility:** Independent Dialysis Units (operated by a non-profit corporation)

**Number of Patients:** 1800

**Number of Physicians:** 50

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**Background**

The Centers for Dialysis Care (CDC) is a network of 15 facilities in five counties in Northeastern Ohio. The gender, racial, and diagnostic/co-morbidity profile of patients is similar to the US. Average age of patients treated by CDC is 59 years, and average age of incident patients is 65.

Within the past two years, staff became aware that there was low adherence to the facility's policy of uncovered accesses. The policy details: that the access will be uncovered, that the catheter will be on top of the last blanket, and that the needle insertions must be visible.

Before a new safety monitoring procedure was developed, staff followed the reliability technique to track current, and subsequent, adherence. The audit included a visual check, as well as random questioning of staff about the facility's actual policy. Prior to a new safety monitoring procedure, staff found only random adherence to the uncovered access policy.

**Policy Implemented**

To increase adherence to policy and ultimately improve patient safety, CDC created mandatory safety announcements. The live announcement is read by the facility's receptionist approximately 15 minutes into each of four patient shifts, when most of the patients will be receiving dialysis treatment. The mandatory announcement about uncovered accesses also may continue with other safety announcements, which are rotated. Immediately following the announcements, nurses and technicians walk around the facility to ensure that accesses are indeed uncovered.

After the safety announcements became part of the patient shifts, adherence to the uncovered accesses policy jumped dramatically from sporadic to 95 percent.

The specific text provided to the receptionist for the safety announcement is as follows:

MEDICAL SECRETARY AND RECEPTIONIST  
Please announce everyday

Must be announced 4x's daily (Once during 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> patient shifts)

MAY I HAVE THE ATTENTION OF ALL CDC PATIENTS. (PAUSE) FOR YOUR SAFETY, WHILE ON DIALYSIS, IT IS REQUIRED THAT ALL ACCESS SITES BE VISABLE TO THE PATIENT CARE STAFF.

AGAIN, IT IS REQUIRED THAT ALL ACCESS SITES BE VISIBLE TO THE PATIENT CARE STAFF.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION; THIS HAS BEEN A "KEEP OUR PATIENTS SAFE" ANNOUNCEMENT.

Additional safety text (sample):

ATTENTION STAFF:

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REPORT ANY MALFUNCTIONING EQUIPMENT SUCH AS DIALYSIS CHAIRS TO THE FACILITY TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT.

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THAT IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO SAFETY TO PUT THEM IN THE SUGGESTION BOX BY THE INJURY BOARD.

### **Recommendations**

Implementing a public address-style announcement to dialysis patients and staff can increase patient safety. Regular safety announcements reinforce staff's adherence to facility policies.

Specific and regular patient safety announcements not only serve as reminders to staff, but also increase patient awareness of the issue and provide assurance of CDC's focus on patient safety. Having a public address announcement sets the safety tone as coming from a higher authority, and presents the staff as agents of that authority.