

Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) Program Deliverable 93: Annual Summary

November 30, 2018





KCER 2018 Annual Summary

2018 Overview

HSAG was awarded the KCER Program contract in March 2016 and has now completed Option Year Two of the contract. The vision for KCER is to build on its current foundation while continuing to follow the concepts, principles, and best practices of an all-hazards comprehensive emergency management program to support the renal community during major crisis or disaster.

KCER plays a leadership and coordinating role at the national level for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and the ESRD Network Program, related to emergency and disaster situations. Specifically, KCER is charged with the centralized coordination of efforts to ensure the safety of dialysis patients through the development and maintenance of an emergency management infrastructure, whose primary mission is to coordinate access to, and continuity of, care and services for dialysis patients. The KCER Program collaboratively develops, disseminates, implements, and maintains a coordinated emergency/disaster preparedness and response infrastructure for the kidney community. KCER functions as the leading authority on emergency preparedness for the kidney community by providing organization and guidance that seamlessly bridges emergency management stakeholders and the ESRD community nationwide.

Leadership Committee and Subject Matter Experts

The KCER Program's strong stakeholder relationships have been critical to the successful management of emergency situations affecting the ESRD population. Key stakeholders to the KCER Program include federal partners, such as EPRO, ASPR, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; ESRD Network Organizations; dialysis providers, including large dialysis organizations, regional chains, and independent units; patients and family members; patient and professional organizations; and local, state, and federal emergency management, State Survey Agencies, and public health departments.

Historically, KCER's stakeholder structure included six Response Team Workgroups and an Executive Committee, which was comprised of the Response Team Workgroup chairs. Based on best practices and lessons learned from previous years, as well as feedback from the renal community, the structure was modified in 2018 to comprise two separate groups, a Leadership Committee and a pool of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). It is expected that this configuration will expand stakeholder participation, as well as enhance opportunities for communication and collaboration in a manner that better meets stakeholder needs.

The Leadership Committee will provide guidance and expertise for the KCER Program, including how best to support the ESRD community in all phases of emergency management (i.e.: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery). The committee will offer feedback on KCER goals and objectives; discuss current activities and assist with troubleshooting barriers; and identify, prioritize, and provide recommendations for potential areas for future action.



The KCER SMEs will serve as a resource for knowledge and information by offering feedback on tools and resources; proposing ideas for education; and linking KCER to other relevant stakeholders or resources. Areas of expertise that may be utilized include communications; dialysis facility operations; clinical practice; emergency management; Medicare regulations; infectious disease; community resources; and mental health.

National KCER Patient and Family Engagement Learning and Action Network (N-KPFE-LAN)

The involvement of the patient subject matter experts (SMEs) in the N-KPFE-LAN ensures that the patient voice is incorporated into all KCER activities and encourages a patient perspective for emergency and disaster preparation. The N-KPFE-LAN has 31 members consisting of patients, family members, and caregivers, drawn from across the ESRD community.

The N-KPFE-LAN Kickoff Meeting took place in February 2018, with subsequent meetings being held every other month. Patients were able to join meetings by teleconference or WebEx. During the initial call, three patient SMEs were asked to share their experiences as a 2017 N-KPFE-LAN member, with each providing examples of how KCER educational materials helped them or a family member during major disaster.

The N-KPFE-LAN members worked together to create a Quality Improvement Activity (QIA), called the *KCER Emergency Preparedness Checklist and Tips* handout and poster. The campaign assists patients to get prepared before a disaster strikes. The resource has been shared on the KCER website and social media pages, with the ESRD Networks, and with community partners, including the American Association of Kidney Patients, the National Kidney Foundation and the American Kidney Fund.

At the request of SMEs, the N-KPFE-LAN created a second QIA. The LAN members created a resource focused on the dialysis emergency disconnect procedure and decided on a half-sheet size resource card that patients can easily carry with them and review on a routine basis. The resource includes easy to follow step-by-step instructions, with corresponding pictures, for patients to quickly reference in the event of an emergency.

Education and Technical Assistance

KCER works directly with the ESRD Networks, dialysis facilities, and patients to improve the care and services provided to ESRD patients during emergency and disaster situations through the provision of educational webinars, educational tools and resources, and technical assistance. KCER developed an Educational Plan that was approved by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in March. The Education Plan serves as a guide for conducting

KCER Emergency Preparedness Checklist and Tips

An emergency can happen at a moment's notice.
Act now and prepare before disaster strikes!

This checklist will help you get started.

You're not prepared if you cannot check these items on your plan:

- My dialysis facility has the current street address and phone number(s) needed to contact me and/or household member(s) or care partner(s).
- I have discussed my emergency plan and my dialysis facility with my household members.
Dialysis facility name: _____
Dialysis facility address: _____
Dialysis facility telephone number: _____
- I have a back-up plan to get care if my dialysis facility is closed.
Alternative dialysis facility: _____
Alternative dialysis facility address: _____
Alternative dialysis facility telephone number: _____
- I have a copy of my current treatment prescription record.
- I check the items in my emergency kit every six months to ensure they have not expired and are working properly.
- I review and update my emergency list at least every six months.
Use this list to help you build your emergency kit:
 - Prescription medications and list of medications
 - Insurance and/or Medicare card
 - Current copy of monthly lab report
 - First aid kit
 - Bottled water
 - Renal diet friendly non-perishable food
 - Cash
 - Spare glasses
 - Manual can opener
 - Warm blanket
 - Battery-powered radio
 - Flashlight with extra batteries
 - Cell phone with charger
 - Books, games, puzzles
 - Contact list of healthcare members
 - Picture identification
 - Car tank full of gas/alternative transportation

Patient Assistance Hotlines
ARA: 888.880.8887 DaVita: 800.400.8331 DCI: 888.424.1900 Fresenius: 800.626.1207 US Renal Care: 866.671.8772
ESRD Network: _____



and providing education at the Network, provider, and patient levels, and will continually incorporate feedback from stakeholders.

As part of the Educational Plan, KCER conducted a needs assessment during 2017 to learn more about the educational needs, and overall emergency preparedness knowledge, of ESRD patients and providers, and to assess preferred methods for receiving emergency preparedness education. The results will be used to guide the provision of targeted resources for the renal community. For 2018, KCER augmented the results by collecting ongoing information in a variety of methods, including the KCER Helpline and email communications; After Action Reports (AARs); feedback obtained during conferences and exhibits; collaboration opportunities; and through activities conducted with volunteers, including the N-KPFE-LAN and the KCER Leadership Committee and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

KCER was invited to participate as a speaker on multiple educational webinars and in-person speaking events throughout the year. KCER presented during a NxStage Kidney Care webinar, on December 7, 2018, titled “*All Hazards.*” KCER also presented at the National Association of Nephrology Technicians (NANT) conference on March 21, 2018. Both presentations were focused on the CMS Emergency Preparedness Final Rule and its impact on ESRD facilities and patients.

KCER also presented on March 22, 2018, at “*Plugged In,*” a free speaker’s series focused on healthcare and disaster preparedness for Florida’s special needs populations. The presentation included an overview of the ESRD Networks, and the KCER program, how the KCER program works with patients, ESRD facilities, and Networks, KCERs response to 2017 disasters, barriers to ESRD care during disasters, and emergency preparedness requirements for dialysis facilities.

Additionally, KCER presented on the lessons learned from the 2017 hurricane season at the Florida Renal Administrators Association (FRAA) annual conference on July 20, 2018, as well as presented on an American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) Healthline webinar focused on disaster preparedness on September 5, 2018.

KCER participates as a Subject Matter Expert on monthly ASPR Critical Infrastructure Protection Program (CIP) Healthcare Sector Coordinating Council (HSCC) calls. The HSCC is a diverse organization that engages all areas of the healthcare sector. Members gain up-to-the-minute access to critical information about threats, protection issues, and security resources. The HSCC also effectively voices member opinions and needs, acting as a major advocate in and resource for government involvement in the healthcare sector

KCER held its annual national disaster exercise on November 7, 2018, in the Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center in Tampa, Florida. The 2018 drill was an operations-based functional exercise, which included actual reactions to the exercise scenario. The scenario was based on each Network experiencing extensive rainfall with unprecedented flooding, and high winds impacting multiple dialysis centers in their respective regions. Some Networks also chose to include wildfires in their respective regions that further impacted dialysis centers. All 18 Networks participated in the drill and actively tested their ability to respond to a major disaster. Representatives from CMS participated in the exercise as part of the simulation cell located in Tampa. Exercise participants were highly engaged throughout the drill, and feedback provided during the exercise hotwash was very favorable.



Coordination of Response Efforts



KCER provides support and guidance to ESRD Networks, providers, and other members of the ESRD community during actual emergencies and disasters. All response effects are tracked by the KCER team, using the KCER Incident Report Tracking Tool, to ensure that all appropriate response actions are carried out for each incident. The tool tracks each incident response from the date that the initial request for assistance is received, until the event is over and the last incident report is distributed. During 2018, KCER responded to a total of 34 events that resulted in over 1,000 changes in facility status, including closures and altered schedules, and the team sent out over 173 incident reports related to the events.

Incident Reports		
December	19	11%
January	14	8%
February	7	4%
March	11	6%
April	9	5%
May	14	8%
June	10	6%
July	22	13%
August	14	8%
September	24	14%
October	20	12%
November	9	5%
Total	173	100%

Incident Type		
Tropical System	4	11%
Hurricane	8	22%
Earthquake	1	3%
Flood	1	3%
Winter Storm	3	8%
Power Outage	1	3%
Severe Weather	3	8%
Tornado	1	3%
Water Outage	1	3%
Wildfire	13	35%
Other	1	3%
Total	37	100%

Also during 2018, KCER activated for two major events, Hurricane Florence in September, and Hurricane Michael in October. KCER was activated from September 10—September 24, 2018, in response to Hurricane Florence, and again from October 9—October 19, 2018 in response to Hurricane Michael. During this time, KCER coordinated national-level preparedness and response activities, including leading daily emergency status calls, reporting on facility operational status and needs, and collaborating with CMS, Networks, dialysis organizations, and other stakeholders to identify and address patient access to care issues.



On September 10, Network 6 formally requested assistance from KCER in preparation for Hurricane Florence, which was projected to make landfall along the Eastern US coastline as a major hurricane. Hurricane Florence made landfall in North Carolina on Friday, September 14, 2018, as a Category 1 hurricane. Hurricane Florence stalled over North and South Carolina for several days, producing catastrophic and deadly flash and river flooding. Record breaking rainfall totals were recorded across North and South Carolina, with parts of North Carolina receiving as much as 33.89 inches in just 48 hours.

Hurricane Florence's Impact on ESRD Community	
 Dialysis Patients	42,270
 Dialysis Facilities	568



Hurricane Florence impacted Networks 5 (Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina) and 6 (Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland), with a combined 568 facilities, treating over 42,000 patients, with reported changes in their operations status due to the storm. All facilities in the impacted area were back to normal operational status by September 24, 2018. The event also caused widespread disruptions to all major infrastructures (e.g. power, water, roads, transportation, and 911 systems) within the impacted areas.

On October 9, 2018, Network 7 formally requested assistance from KCER in preparation for Hurricane Michael, which was projected to make landfall along the Gulf Coast of Florida as a major hurricane. Hurricane Michael made landfall along the Florida Panhandle on Wednesday, October 10, 2018, as a Category 4 hurricane. Hurricane Michael continued on a northwestward path across the southeastern United States, impacting Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia before moving off the Mid-Atlantic coast on Friday, October 12, 2018.

Hurricane Michael's Impact on ESRD Community	
Dialysis Patients 	4,700
Dialysis Facilities 	90

Hurricane Michael impacted Network 6 (Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina), Network 7 (Florida), and Network 8 (Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee) with a combined total of 90 facilities, treating over 4,700 patients, that had reported changes in their operations status due to the storm. One facility in Florida received significant damage and remains closed long-term, with all other remaining facilities back to normal operational status by October 17, 2018. The event caused widespread disruptions to all major infrastructures (e.g. power, water, roads, transportation, and 911 systems) within the impacted areas.

On multiple occasions, KCER worked urgently to connect patients with resources to facilitate rescues from flood and post-hurricane conditions and to assist with emergency transportation needs for dialysis treatment.

Stakeholder Collaboration

KCER improved community stakeholder relationships by continually striving to enhance collaboration opportunities within these groups. Building and sustaining positive relationships among partners is imperative to ensure continuity of care and services for ESRD patients during a major crisis or disaster.

During the response and recovery efforts for Hurricanes Florence and Michael, KCER worked directly with many new and existing stakeholders to enhance the overall outcome of the recovery for the ESRD patient population. KCER also provided daily reports outlining the current status of the incident response, and the operational status and needs of dialysis providers.

KCER collaborated with an existing partner, Healthcare Ready, to address medication needs, as well as supply chain distribution issues. Healthcare Ready also assisted with patient rescues and transportation resources for dialysis patients and providers.



KCER also participated in daily emergency calls with the ASPR CIP HSCC during the response to Hurricanes Florence and Michael. Attendance of these calls served to elevate the profile of KCER and brought the current status and unmet needs of the ESRD community to the group.

Treatment and Medicine Recall Notifications

KCER has developed a process to monitor medical updates for treatment and medicine recall notices related to ESRD services. All KCER staff members are registered for the FDA MedWatch program to receive e-mails regarding medication and recall alerts. Each alert is reviewed by a nephrology nurse, and if it is determined to be relevant to the ESRD community, it is sent via email to the ESRD community via the KCER Safety Alert distribution list, as well as posted on the KCER website and shared via social media. From December 2017 to November 2018, KCER issued 22 treatment and medication recall notifications to the ESRD community.

Social Media Outreach

KCER utilizes two social media accounts, Twitter and Facebook, as additional outreach for communicating important preparedness information, along with resources and education pertaining to emergency management topics and events for members the ESRD community. Account postings are made daily topics ranging from disaster preparedness to current infectious disease statuses. The social media accounts also play a major role during disaster response and recovery. KCER uses social media during disasters as a tool to provide situational updates, current information and relevant communications messaging to the ESRD community in a timely and effective manner.



Summary

KCER will continue to build on its current foundation and follow the concepts, principles, and best practices of an all-hazards comprehensive emergency management program to support the nation's ESRD organizations during a major crisis or disaster. KCER will focus on continually enhancing engagement with the N-KPFE-LAN to ensure that the patient voice is incorporated into all KCER activities. Technology continues to play a major role in disaster response and recovery and KCER strives to improve the technology utilized related to situational awareness through continued integration of Social Media platforms during all phases of an emergency or disaster. Additionally, KCER will continue to facilitate enhanced Network and community stakeholder relationships by offering additional collaboration opportunities among these groups. Building and sustaining positive relationships among partners is imperative to ensure continuity of care and services for dialysis patients during a major crisis or disaster.