

Guidelines for Assessment and Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation

Pursuit of personal rehabilitation goals can help ESRD patients to stay healthier and feel better. Research shows that people on dialysis who keep working feel better. They are more physically able, have less pain, and have better general health and energy¹. Talk with your patients about the benefits of maintaining an active lifestyle *before* they make the decision to go on disability. Social work efforts to promote vocational rehabilitation are important interventions in trying to improve the social functioning of patients. These include providing patients with job retention strategies, or making referrals to job training, re-training, and employment counseling and placement services.

Your intervention can have an impact on the social functioning of your patients!



Upon Admission meet with the patient and:

- Encourage work retention
- Educate about the benefits of employment
- Engage in a discussion of personal rehabilitation goals, including but not limited to vocational rehabilitation programs, activities that enhance independence and a higher quality of life, such as volunteer work or education
- Offer to help with identified areas of need
- Refer to resources as appropriate
- Provide materials to aid in making important work, insurance, and other lifestyle decisions



Provide patients with these tips about Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services:

- End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) patients are eligible for VR counseling
- VR can assist with training
- VR offers help to individuals with keeping their current job
- Be persistent with VR counselors



Patients who are already receiving SSDI or SSI may be referred to:

- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Organizations
Toll Free: (800) 772-1213
TTY: (800) 325-0778
- Maximus (866) 968-7842 (Ticket to Work manager)
- Local VR offices
- Social Security Administration (SSA) Working While Disabled information



Prior to each Care Plan meeting, ask patients:

- If they are satisfied with their current level of activity
- If there have been any changes in their employment status
- If they are interested in pursuing new educational interests
- If they need assistance with their personal rehabilitation goals



Annually, per Network Criteria & Standards:

- Evaluate each patient age 18 through 54 for VR referral and make available to patients the VR resources obtainable in the area (Network year-end survey)
- Document VR status in the patient's medical record

1. Blake C. Codd MB, Cassidy A. O'Meara YM. Physical function, employment and quality of life in end stage renal disease. *J Nephrol*; 13 (2): 142-9, 2000

* Information provided courtesy of Southern California Renal Disease Council, Inc., ESRD Network 18; Adapted from Network 7 document: HEY DOC and Vocational Rehabilitation Best Practice Checklist December 2007; Reviewed 6/23/ 2010