

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What if I have a problem, but am afraid my facility staff will get upset with me if I try to talk with them about it?

A. You can call the Western Pacific Renal Network office for assistance in resolving problems either formally or informally, or call your State Health Department and talk with them about your concerns. You have the choice of remaining anonymous.

Q. What should I do if I see a problem that could be a serious threat to my health and safety, or the safety of others?

A. You should tell your healthcare team **RIGHT AWAY!** If you have already told your healthcare team, but feel that they are not trying to solve the problem, you may call your State Health Department.

California Health Department 800-236-9747	Hawaii Health Department 808-692-7420
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Please Understand!

1) It may take time to make changes or fix problems. Not everything that is a problem for you can be changed or fixed.

2) Each facility has its own grievance and complaint policies and rules.

3) You do have the right to contact other agencies directly without using your own facility grievance process.

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HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEMS WITHIN YOUR FACILITY

A GUIDE FOR DIALYSIS PATIENTS

The Western Pacific Renal Network facilitates improvement of the quality of care provided to end-stage renal disease patients.

Most Problems or Concerns in Dialysis Facilities Seem to Fall into These 3 Areas:

1) Facility Rules

You may not like or agree with some of your facility's rules.

Examples are:

- Treatment schedules
- Chair assignments
- Eating or drinking during dialysis
- Policy about visitors
- Clinic temperatures

2) Relationships

You may have difficulty getting along with facility staff or other patients. Examples are:

- Staff acting in a disrespectful way
- Staff not speaking English in your presence
- Staff not responding to your requests for assistance
- Another patient or a visitor causing disruption to you or others

3) Problems with the Care You are Receiving (Quality of Care Issues)

These are problems that could affect your health or the health of other patients. Examples are:

- Staff that you feel are poorly trained
- Bad infection control or hygiene methods
- Dialysis treatments that are not giving you good lab values
- Medical problems not being treated as quickly as you feel they should be

What Should I Do If I Have a Problem at My Facility?

Step 1

Always begin by trying to talk to the people who work at your facility. The best place to ask questions, get information, or make suggestions is with your healthcare team.

Step 2

If talking to your healthcare team does not solve your concern, you can file a complaint/grievance with your facility. A complaint/grievance is a written or verbal concern that allows you to tell your facility's company managers (who often work outside the facility) that you have a problem.

Step 3

If you file a complaint/grievance at your facility and you feel that the problem has not been solved, or, if a reasonable amount of time passes and no action has been taken to solve the problem, you can submit your complaint/grievance by phone or letter to the Western Pacific Renal Network or your State Health Department, the agency that surveys dialysis and transplant facilities. (See back of brochure for telephone numbers.)

Every dialysis facility is required by Federal law to have a *complaint/grievance procedure* for trying to work out patient concerns or problems. Ask to see a copy.

The **Western Pacific Renal Network** is the agency that facilitates improvement of quality of care provided to ESRD patients.