

Dialysis = Life

Ohio Impact Report



Ohio Collaborative Dialysis Coalition

Serving Patients & Communities



Dear Community Partners and Friends,

It's been my pleasure to serve as a provider and advocate for Ohio's dialysis patients and their families for more than 40 years. Our work to improve the health of our communities is how we "walk the talk," using our knowledge, skills and resources to help those we care for live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Ohio is served by 350 community dialysis centers that share a commitment to putting patients first. The providers employ caring professionals who provide a full range of services to support patients before, during and after their dialysis treatments. Managing a life-threatening condition day in and day out is a daunting task. We surround our patients with the support they need to sustain and improve their health. And we provide that care in their communities, exceeding national quality and patient satisfaction measures.

In this report, we've highlighted the important work we do and how it benefits our patients, our community and our state. We want you to understand more about our patients and the care we provide, especially the important social and economic benefits of convenient, high-quality, community-based dialysis centers to the health of Ohio. Together, we make an amazing impact on every precious life we touch. And isn't that what it's all about?

Diane Wish

Ohio Collaborative Dialysis Coalition

Life-sustaining, cost-effective treatment, delivered close to home

Ohio's 350 outpatient dialysis clinics are conveniently located throughout the state in urban, suburban and rural areas. They provide local, life-sustaining treatment to more than 17,000 Ohioans who must receive dialysis for end stage renal disease (ESRD).

The quality of dialysis care in Ohio compares exceptionally well against national measures and meets or exceeds averages across a variety of patient satisfaction and performance metrics. Ohio's clinics are providing high-quality, cost-effective, life-sustaining care, while at the same time helping to reduce higher-cost hospital stays.



Roland, Patient
Roseville, Ohio

Roland, an ESRD patient for five years, leads an active life that includes travel and volunteer service as a patient advocate on local medical boards. He travels a short distance to receive dialysis care three times each week, at Kidney Care Center in Zanesville. Roland reports that kidney treatments greatly help his cardio health, following a previous open heart surgery. "Dialysis is the best thing that's ever happened to me, I feel a lot better," said Roland. The trusted and skilled staff at his center "go the extra mile" to help him stay healthy overall.



Who needs dialysis and how does it work?

Dialysis is a treatment that replaces some functions of the kidneys when they are no longer working effectively. ESRD occurs when an individual loses 85 to 90% of kidney function, which results in permanent kidney failure. Two main causes of ESRD are diabetes and high blood pressure. In individuals with chronic kidney disease, the kidneys gradually lose the ability to properly filter blood.

There are five stages of kidney failure, and individuals who reach Stage 5 (ESRD) require dialysis for the rest of their lives or a kidney transplant to survive.

The vast majority of Ohio dialysis patients (88%) choose outpatient dialysis at a community dialysis clinic.

Outpatient dialysis is typically performed three times a week, with each treatment lasting approximately four hours. Most ESRD patients receive dialysis for years at the same clinic, developing strong bonds with staff and other patients. They often come to feel that their dialysis community is truly a second family. Dialysis patients are cared for by an interdisciplinary team including nurses, Ohio Certified Dialysis Technicians, social workers, and dietitians as well as the patient's nephrologist (kidney doctor).

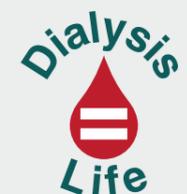
According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, ESRD prevalence is about 3.7 times greater in African Americans, 1.4 times greater in Native Americans, and 1.5 times greater in Asian Americans, compared to Caucasians.

Ohio Dialysis Patient Profile:

- More than 17,000 Ohioans on dialysis
- 43% women, 57% men
- 62% white, 37% African American; 1% other
- Median age is 64

George Ann, Patient
South Webster, Ohio

Three times a week, George Ann travels 24 miles to receive dialysis treatment at the American Renal Associates in Jackson. She's in her chair by 5:30 a.m. for her blood cleaning procedure. George Ann thinks the staff members who care for her are "wonderful" and reports that at every visit, the staff asks if she is doing okay and makes sure she has what she needs to be well. The staff is like a second family. She notes the spotless condition of her center and that staff "clean the equipment and facilities thoroughly" every day. In addition, George Ann depends on a local service for transportation to her appointments and she has a strong bond with her driver. "My center is my way to stay alive," George Ann said.

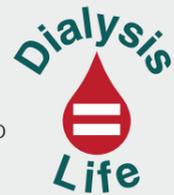


How do community-based dialysis clinics work within Ohio's healthcare system?

Ohio community-based dialysis clinics are licensed by the Ohio Department of Health, certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and are highly regulated by state and federal laws.

Medicare coverage is available to ESRD patients under the age of 65 who meet certain requirements. Medicaid and all private insurance companies cover dialysis.

Renee, LPN
Zanesville, Ohio



She knows a thing or two about dialysis. Renee has provided nursing care for over 31 years and has seen many positive changes that benefit patients. Renee notes that when she started her career, many patients had to drive 60 or more miles to receive care, three times a week. With the onset of community-based dialysis centers, most patients are able to receive their weekly treatments much closer to home. Trust is a huge factor for patients and dialysis care staff. With the frequency of their weekly treatments and relationships with staff, there is a deep level of trust that Renee has built with her patients. Renee promotes organ donation and is happy when her patients are able to have a successful kidney transplant, some of whom stay in contact with her to show their progress.

Among the Ohioans receiving dialysis treatment:

- 85-90% are covered by Medicare or Medicaid
- 10-15% are covered by private insurance

With hypertension (high blood pressure) and diabetes, both of which are primary causes of ESRD, on the rise, demand for dialysis services nationwide is increasing. Demand for dialysis services is estimated to increase by 3.5% per year for the next decade. The multi-disciplinary teams at Ohio's community-based dialysis centers help prevent costly hospitalizations. The average total cost of health care for an individual with ESRD is approximately \$89,000 per year.



Local, convenient clinics are essential to good patient outcomes

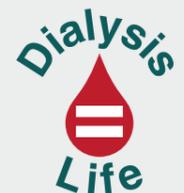
Access to dialysis services is literally a life and death proposition for Ohioans with ESRD. Unlike acute or temporary renal (kidney) failure that can be treated and resolved, ESRD is a chronic, life-threatening illness in which an individual's kidney function is less than 15 percent of required capacity.

Local access to dialysis services is crucial for these patients and their families. The further patients must travel, even for life-sustaining services, the more difficult compliance with a care regimen can be. Most dialysis patients require transportation assistance to and from dialysis sessions. Some insurance programs, including Medicaid, might provide transportation coverage based on patient need, which can range from a cab ride to a wheelchair accessible van, and rarely, ambulance transportation if the patient meets certain criteria. Because transportation companies are generally not able to cross county lines, and Medicaid does not cover transportation costs to other counties, it is essential that patients have access to dialysis in their communities. Many communities offer some type of local transportation assistance, but finding adequate transportation to dialysis appointments three times a week can still be challenging for many patients and their families, especially those in rural areas.



Patients receive more than just dialysis at community-based clinics. Health professionals employed by the clinics help patients successfully manage their condition by addressing the full range of issues faced by their ESRD patients. Fluid intake, dietary modifications, transplant education, transitions of care and many other challenges to good health are met with support from social workers, dietitians, nurses, technicians, doctors and educators.

Sharon, Patient
Delaware, Ohio



"They care about me a lot," said Sharon, who receives her dialysis services at US Renal Care in Delaware. Sharon reports that each person—from the manager, the patient care technicians, nurses, receptionist and doctors—consistently practices a high level of medical skill and caring. She notes that every patient is treated well and staff "goes out of their way" to ensure the comfort and safety of each person. In Sharon's experience, the facility is always clean, the chairs are comfortable and wellness information is provided regularly. Sharon said there is a strong commitment to great service through the professional teamwork of the staff and she feels fortunate to have such an excellent facility so close to her home.

How do dialysis centers contribute to Ohio's economy?

Broad and comprehensive services are provided to all dialysis center patients by a team of caregivers, regardless of the patient's ability to pay. Care team members include doctors, nurses, technicians, dietitians, social workers, water technicians, transportation providers and administrators. More than 6,000 Ohioans are employed by community dialysis centers. Professional and licensed staff members are among higher wage earners with steady careers and longevity of service. Non-professional workers earn competitive wages with benefits and the availability of training for professional growth.

In addition, clinic operators pay local and state taxes and purchase goods and services locally, bringing with them a positive impact on the economy of the communities they serve. For instance, in Dayton, DaVita, one of the largest dialysis center operators in the state, locally purchased a \$2.5 million water system for its clinics in that area and continues to work with the water system company.

In 2019, Fresenius Medical Care built two new dialysis facilities in Ohio, in Ashtabula and Wilmington. The two facilities were built at a total cost of \$3 million, using local sources for construction, materials and services.

Centers for Dialysis Care East Cleveland, Ohio

- Completed August 2019
- 42,000 square feet
- \$15.5 million in construction costs; local contractor
- \$4+ million furniture and equipment
- 10,000+ patient treatments annually
- Patient input incorporated into plans
- State-of-the-art water treatment and disinfection system
- 70 employees
- Adjacent plaza named and dedicated to local civil rights leaders



How do the clinics impact their local communities?

Beyond employment and taxes, many of Ohio's dialysis centers give back to their communities by providing health education and kidney screenings at no cost. They also support research and local philanthropic and community organizations including local YMCA facilities, fire departments, Ronald McDonald Houses, Councils on Aging, homeless shelters, Kidney Foundations, and food pantries, among others.

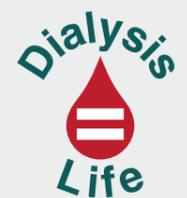
Providing care to veterans, disproportionately-affected minorities, and rural communities are essential elements of the business model of community-based dialysis centers. Veterans who get their healthcare benefits through the VA can receive dialysis services at VA dialysis facilities throughout the United States. However the majority receive their treatment at a community-based dialysis clinic. Minorities—African Americans and Hispanics—are disproportionately affected by ESRD.

Eighty-three of Ohio's 88 counties have at least one dialysis clinic, making close-by care available throughout the state to those who need it.



Brett, Patient
Piketon, Ohio

Because of dialysis, Brett lives a full and productive life and enjoys being part of three families. In addition to his own relatives, Brett considers his fellow patients and the staff at American Renal Associates in Piketon as another family. And because he is compliant with his treatments and diet, Brett is able to work and considers the MRDD adults he cares for at a group home as his third family. "I am living proof you can live your life and feel good doing what you like," he said. Brett receives dialysis services three times each week, hitting the chair by 5:15 a.m. He has been receiving treatments for seven and a half years. Morning treatments allow him to spend his afternoons and evenings working for a local MRDD residential facility. Brett likes to travel as well and he credits the long-serving and skilled staff at the center for helping him be as healthy as possible. He especially recognizes his dietitian and the food and drink regimen he follows, which is critical for a dialysis patient to stay healthy.





Ohio's community dialysis clinics are providing life-sustaining, high-quality, cost-effective care

Dialysis is a life-sustaining treatment for many fragile, vulnerable patients. Those most impacted by ESRD are generally underserved populations—minorities, veterans, residents of rural areas—and community-based dialysis centers provide the most convenient access to high-quality treatment and help reduce hospital admissions, lowering the overall cost of care.

In addition to reducing hospital admission rates, Ohio's dialysis centers contribute to a cost-effective healthcare system by decreasing mortality rates and decreasing infection rates. Patients who receive treatments provided by Ohio's outpatient dialysis centers depend on this care to manage their fragile health status, avoid costly hospitalizations and provide them with a better quality of life.

Connie, Patient
Circleville, Ohio

"Please don't take my family away, or my center either!" Connie has strong feelings for her fellow patients and the staff members who have cared for her over the last two and a half years at Pickaway Dialysis Center. For her three weekly treatments, Connie reports that the receptionist greets her with a smile and the head nurse, social worker and nutritionist are "right on it," not just with kidney care but overall health and wellness care for each patient. Connie appreciates their patience and kindness to every patient they serve.



Marie, Facility Administrator
DaVita Shaker Square, Cleveland, Ohio

For over 20 years, Marie has changed people's lives through dialysis. As a facility administrator, she gets great joy and satisfaction from seeing patients improve their health, succeed in life and continue with the activities they enjoy. Marie remembers a time when dialysis was thought of as a "death sentence" but because of improvements in dialysis systems and overall patient health care, she has seen patients able to raise families, work, attend school, and serve as mentors among other activities. Marie said she "loves the fact that on a moment's basis we can change someone's life by the service and care we provide." She simply adds, "WE GIVE LIFE!".

Key Facts about Ohio Community-Based Dialysis Centers

- 350 outpatient dialysis clinics throughout the state provide life-sustaining treatment to more than 17,000 Ohioans with end stage renal disease.
- 88% of Ohio dialysis patients choose to be treated at a community-based dialysis clinic.
- Dialysis for end stage renal disease occurs at a higher rate for African Americans and Hispanics.
- In addition to dialysis services, patients receive a wide variety of support services from clinics including mental health referrals, transplant education, transition of care following hospitalization, social worker and dietitian consultations and education, and referrals to community resources.
- Ohio's dialysis centers employ more than 6,000 Ohioans. Jobs range from doctors, nurses, technicians, dietitians, social workers, water technicians, transportation personnel and administrators.
- Dialysis centers regularly give back to their communities by providing health education and kidney screenings at no cost.
- Community-based dialysis centers provide the most convenient access to high-quality treatment and help reduce hospital admissions, lowering the overall cost of care.

Sources:

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- Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, Dialysis Facility Report Data for FY 2019, <https://data.cms.gov/Medicare/Dialysis-Facility-Report-Data-for-FY-2019/4y3p-fyx9>
- National Kidney Foundation, <https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/KidneyFailure>
- Ohio Renal Association, <https://www.ohiorenalassociation.org/>

**For more information visit:
www.dialysisequalslife.com**

The Ohio Collaborative Dialysis Coalition is an advocacy organization for Ohio's dialysis patients and providers of care.

All photos depict patients and facilities in Ohio.