

Transportation Best Practices

Transportation is an issue that all dialysis facilities face throughout the year. Here is a list of best practices sent into the ESRD Network from staff members who have been successful in combating this issue. If you are currently struggling to find ways to help your patients find safe and reliable rides, look through the options below. If you have an additional way to help patients overcome transportation issues, please email your story to:

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DaVita Lake St. Louis in MO/DCI Columbia in MO: Create a good working relationship with transportation providers that are present in your area. For patients with Medicaid, see if you can submit standing orders to MTM (medical transportation management), and then call the local provider directly to let them know they should be getting an order from MTM. I know it's above and beyond, but this seems to be the only way to ensure patients get a ride through MTM. If applicable for your area, refer to the local Area Agency on Aging to assist patients with finding transportation resources. Companies like this will sometimes have funding to assist with mileage reimbursement or contracts with local providers for patients that do not qualify for Medicaid. Transportation through the Veterans Administration (VA) could be available as well for military patients. If the patient resides at a Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility, ask if they are able to provide rides. Keep in mind this may change the patient's treatment schedule. Open communication is key, make sure to check in with your patients often to keep up to date with their transportation needs. MTM currently functions in IL, MO, NE, and KS, but according to their website they do not function in IA.

East Peoria Home Dialysis in IL: Because companies like Lyft and Uber can be very expensive for patients who do not live near their facility, attempt to collect contact information for patients who live near one another and can share a ride. This may cause the patients to have longer wait times for Home patient's monthly appointments, but this way they do not have to skip an entire month's appointment.

Mercy Medical Center in IA/DaVita Stony Creek IL: For in-center patients who utilize the public bus system, check that it runs seven days a week. When a patient starts at the facility, collect as many family and friends' contact information as possible, and ask who you can call for a ride when inclement weather hits or the patient's first ride falls through. If a patient is willing to give another patient a ride, with permission, add their name and phone number and ride availability to a bulletin board for other patients to access.

Hope Again Dialysis in MO: If the patient is not picked up by a third-party transport service, call the company directly to find out why they are not picking up the patient and if there is a better time for them. When possible, move the patient's treatment schedule around to better accommodate transportation availability when they are utilizing a third-party transport service.

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DCI Columbia in MO: Through the Missouri Kidney Program, a patient can apply for transportation assistance for either gas reimbursement or transportation provider. If you live outside of this area there may be a local company that can do the same for the patient. Paratransit, which is a program that only runs in Columbia, MO, provides free transportation for people who are disabled. Patients complete an application and are required to attend an educational meeting. Again, if you live outside of this area, check with local companies to see if such a service exists. Central Missouri Kidney Association (CMKA) provides gas cards to patients in emergency situations. Typically, there is a limit for each year. CMKA provides assistance as a last resort.

South Barrington Dialysis Center in IL: Check to see if your area has a caregiving service that provides rides. This is generally much cheaper than a Taxi/Lyft/Uber. Often, there are services who charge a flat rate and provide rides to senior citizens or someone in a wheelchair.