



Midwest Kidney Network (ESRD Network 11)  
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To: ESRD facility Administrators, Renal Nurse Managers, Medical Directors, Renal Social Workers, Renal Dietitians, Transplant Surgeons, Transplant Coordinators, and All Interested Parties

From: James Brandes, MD, President  
Jonathan Segal, MD, Medical Review Committee Chairman  
Jeff Nelson, Consumer Committee Chairman  
Diane Carlson, Executive Director

Subject: **CMS Contract for ESRD Network 11 and Introducing Superior Health Quality Alliance**

### **CMS Contract for End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network 11**

After a competitive bidding process, CMS awarded the ESRD Network 11 contract to Midwest Kidney Network, a member of Superior Health Quality Alliance. This contract is for 2021 – 2026, and we look forward to working with you on improving care for people with ESRD. The CMS contract responsibilities continue projects such as promoting home dialysis and kidney transplantation. Additional new responsibilities include reducing unplanned hospital admissions, readmissions, and emergency department visits and reducing blood transfusions and peritonitis in nursing home residents on dialysis. Please watch for more information on the many upcoming changes!

### **Introducing Superior Health Quality Alliance (Superior Health)**

In 2017, CMS announced that quality improvement contractors, such as ESRD Networks, Quality Improvement Networks, and Hospital Improvement Networks, would be consolidated and called a Network of Quality Improvement and Innovation Contractor (NQIIC). In response, organizations in the upper midwestern states formed [Superior Health Quality Alliance](#), a non-profit joint venture. In 2019, CMS awarded Superior Health Quality Alliance as an NQIIC. Superior Health is an elegantly efficient organization, which leverages all the expertise of quality improvement science, hospital relationships, nursing home relationships, and End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) relationships within one joint venture organization.

Members of this joint venture include the following organizations.

- Midwest Kidney Network
- MPRO
- MetaStar
- Stratis Health
- Illinois Hospital Association
- Michigan Health & Hospital Association
- Minnesota Hospital Association
- Wisconsin Hospital Association



### **Advantages of Superior Health**

Superior Health offers the best value to the healthcare community because this unique joint venture directs federal funding to the work of healthcare improvement, with minimal administrative overhead. With all eight member organizations working with healthcare providers in the upper midwestern states, quality improvement and care transitions are coordinated within one organization. This scope, scale, and breadth of experience offers the following advantages.

- Superior Health has a strong leadership team.
  - Jesi Wang, President
  - Tania Daniels, Chief Executive Officer
  - Paul Neitzel, Chief Financial Officer
- All Superior Health members have long-term relationships with senior leaders in healthcare, essential for systems level improvement and behavior change.
- Infection control, care transitions, patient and family engagement, COVID-19 mitigation, vaccinations, and reducing unplanned hospitalizations are integral work of all Superior Health member organizations.
- Working together, Superior Health can address healthcare for people with ESRD in healthcare settings across the continuum of care including ESRD facilities, hospitals, nursing homes, and Chronic Kidney Disease clinics.

### **Summary and Next Steps**

So, we will continue to work with you as Midwest Kidney Network and as a member of Superior Health Quality Alliance, designed to continue our nephrology focus AND a focus across healthcare settings to meet bold new goals.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to working with you!