

# Share Your Voice as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) Volunteer with the ESRD National Coordinating Center

## What is a SME?

A SME is a subject matter expert. He or she is someone like you, a kidney patient or caregiver active in a patient's care. A SME is an expert who knows what it is like to have or care for someone with kidney disease, someone who is willing to share his or her experience to improve the quality of care for all kidney patients.

## Why should I be a SME?

SMEs bring the patient/caregiver point of view to the kidney community. The patient/caregiver voice helps drive improvement in the quality of care and quality of life of people with kidney disease.

## What is the NPFE-LAN Vision?

The End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) National Coordinating Center (NCC) and the ESRD Networks will include the patient/ caregiver voice in all areas of kidney care.

## What does the ESRD NCC do?

The ESRD NCC supports the 18 ESRD Networks at a national level. It directs and coordinates quality improvement activities with the Networks and helps improve quality of care and quality of life for kidney patients.

## Share • Learn • Spread

### What is a LAN?

A **LAN** brings people together to solve a shared problem on a large scale. Everyone in the LAN has an equal voice. In our LAN, you can share your story, new ideas, and ways to improve how things work so patients get better care; everyone benefits. Within the LAN, members participate in smaller groups called **Affinity Groups**.

An Affinity Group is a small group of people who share the same interest or goal. Our LAN will have five separate Affinity Groups focused on specific areas of dialysis and transplant care.

### What are the benefits of membership?

When you join the NPFE-LAN, you will have the chance to:

- Meet other people who want to help people with kidney disease.
- Share your ideas on how to improve kidney care.
- Be a voice for other kidney patients and their caregivers.
- Help make patient care better at a national level.

### How will I know what to do?

The ESRD NCC will guide the Affinity Groups so members can feel good about sharing their experience and ideas during the meeting.

### How much time will this take?

You will spend approximately an hour every other month as an Affinity Group member, including participation in webinars (by phone and/or computer).

### Next Steps

Let your ESRD Network know you are interested. Once nominated, a member of the ESRD NCC team will contact you with more information.



Tools and resources created for Patients by Patients!

# You can make a difference in the lives of kidney patients by...

Developing tools to help patients prevent infections.



Making sure patients are educated about all their treatment options.



Helping to dispel myths about the kidney transplant process.



Talking about the importance of having a voice in your healthcare.

## Each Affinity Group will bring patient and caregiver SMEs together to work on important projects like these:

Depression	Increase the number of patients accurately screened and treated for depression.
Hospitalizations	Decrease hospital admissions and outpatient emergency room visits.
Kidney Transplant	Increase patient access to the kidney transplant waitlist. Increase the number of patients receiving a kidney transplant.
Home Dialysis and Nursing Home Care	Reduce blood transfusions of dialysis patients in nursing homes. Decrease the catheter infection and peritonitis rates in home dialysis patients at nursing homes. Increase the number of patients starting dialysis with a home treatment option. Increase telemedicine access to home dialysis therapy in rural areas.
COVID-19 and Vaccinations	Decrease the percentage of COVID-19 hospitalizations in the ESRD population. Increase dialysis patients receiving the flu shot.