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## **Partnership aims to transform kidney care**

### **Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance launches in Missouri and Kansas**

(Kansas City, Mo.) In an effort to demonstrate that the delivery of kidney care can be improved from the patient perspective and to reduce the overall cost of care for ESRD beneficiaries, Dialysis Clinic, Inc. (DCI), has joined forces with a select group of community health partners to establish the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance, an End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Seamless Care Organization (ESCO) in Missouri and Kansas.

The Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance (HAKCA) is a partnership among the following health care providers:

- Dialysis Clinic, Inc.
- Garry Reams, MD, PC
- Kidney Associates of Kansas City, PC
- Nephrology & Hypertension Associates, LLP
- David Wuellner, MD
- Tarek Darwish, MD
- Lisa Kolb, MD

Under the new Comprehensive End-Stage Renal Disease Care (CEC) Model, each Participant in the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance will provide individually tailored care in order to improve health outcomes for aligned ESRD patients in the region.

“I became involved in the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance because I believe it will allow me to provide a more detailed, higher level of care for kidney patients in Mid-Missouri,” said June Watson, DO of Nephrology & Hypertension Associates, LLP. “There will be resources, as well as a wealth of educational material at their disposal.”

Patients who are treated in the DCI facilities participating in the ESCO and who have Medicare Fee-for-Service as primary insurance are automatically aligned to the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance. Notices will be mailed to patients by January 31, 2017, informing them of the new program.

The benefits of being in the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance for patients include

- A dedicated care coordinator who assists with the coordination of care for patients as they move from one healthcare setting to the next
- Planning for vascular access placement and ongoing care
- Assistance in finding community-based services
- Medication therapy management services delivered through a specialized pharmacy program, REACH MTM

- Various modalities of education that are tailored to meet the patient’s needs

“Kidney disease impacts many facets of a person’s health. Knowing this, I work with various providers to ensure patients receive comprehensive care from the early chronic kidney disease stages through the end of life,” said Tarek Darwish, MD. “I find it reassuring to know that the HAKCA care coordinator will help me provide a wide variety of resources to patients along the continuum of kidney disease.”

Each member of the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance was asked to participate in the ESCO in order to provide a well-rounded network of support for patients. Participants in the HAKCA that are designated as ESCO owners are financially responsible for all care provided to patients in the ESCO program, not just dialysis care or care specifically related to a patient’s kidney disease. The ESCO gives providers a unique opportunity to take ownership of both the clinical and financial outcomes of each ESRD patient.

Approximately 500 Medicare ESRD beneficiaries will be served by the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance. DCI dialysis patients will not experience a change in their health insurance coverage or benefit options.

Medicare patients from the following Dialysis Clinic, Inc., locations will be aligned to the Heart of America Kidney Care Alliance:

- DCI – Belton
- DCI – Columbia
- DCI – Jefferson City
- DCI – Jefferson City East
- DCI – Kansas City Carondelet
- DCI – Kansas City Rockhill
- DCI – Lee’s Summit
- DCI – Mexico
- DCI – Moberly
- DCI – Sedalia
- DCI – Warrensburg

More information about the program can be found at <http://www.heartofamericakidneycare.com/>

More information about the CEC Initiative can be found at:  
<http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/comprehensive-ESRD-care/>

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