

The Chronic Kidney Disease Improvement in Research and Treatment Act (H.R. 5027/S.4469)

The American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA) is a nonprofit organization with a membership of approximately 7,000 registered nurses and other health care professionals at all levels of practice. ANNA members work in settings such as chronic kidney disease management, peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, continuous renal replacement therapy, transplantation, industry, and government/regulatory agencies.

Background on the Issue

Over 37 million Americans are living with kidney disease and according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), as many as 9 in 10 Americans living with kidney disease are not even aware they have the chronic condition. If the disease is left untreated, it can progress to kidney failure, also commonly referred to as End Stage Kidney Disease (ESKD), an irreversible medical condition that requires a transplant or dialysis. The National Institutes of Health estimates that by 2030, between 970,000 and 1.2 million Americans will be living with ESKD.

Overview of the Legislation

The *Chronic Kidney Disease Improvement in Research and Treatment Act* (H.R. 5027/S.4469) aims to address the rising prevalence of chronic kidney disease. The legislation would do the following:

- Boost kidney disease prevention efforts by adding Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) screening to the annual wellness benefit to allow Medicare beneficiaries at risk for kidney disease or kidney failure to screen for the disease and seek treatment to slow the progression if diagnosed.
- Expand access to education resources by expanding the Medicare Kidney Disease Education benefit to allow dialysis facilities to provide kidney disease education services and offer services to Medicare beneficiaries with Stage 5 CKD who are not yet on dialysis.
- Incentivize innovation by requiring the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide a long-term payment pathway for new drugs, biologics, devices, or other technologies.
- Develop a sustainable dialysis infrastructure and address the workforce crisis by ensuring that kidney care providers receive accurate annual payment updates and fostering the nephrology pipeline by including nephrologists and non-physician practitioners in the National Health Service Corp loan forgiveness program.
- Expand patient choice and coverage by guaranteeing access to Medigap policies for Medicare beneficiaries with kidney failure.

Recommendation: ANNA supports the *Chronic Kidney Disease Improvement in Research and Treatment Act* (H.R. 5027 and S. 4469) and encourages Members of Congress to cosponsor the important legislation.