



Dialysis & Nephrology

A monthly report by Benesch on the
Dialysis & Nephrology Industry

DIGEST

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March 21, 2024

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

Calendar of Events

MARCH 23–27, 2024

2024 Society of Interventional Radiology Annual Scientific Meeting

Salt Lake City, UT

For information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 11, 2024

RPA Seminar: 2024 Nephrology Coding and Billing Workshop

For more information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 11–14, 2024

RPA 2024 Annual Meeting

Baltimore, MD

For information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 14–17, 2024

ANNA: National Symposium

Orlando, FL

For more information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 25, 2024

OEIS Marketing Strategy Workshop

Las Vegas, NV (Concurrent with 2024 OEIS Annual Meeting)

For more information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 25, 2024

2024 OEIS Technology Forum

Las Vegas, NV (Concurrent with OEIS Annual Meeting)

For more information, please click [here](#).

APRIL 25–27, 2024

OEIS: 11th Annual National Scientific Meeting

Las Vegas, NV

For information, please click [here](#).

MAY 14–18, 2024

NKF: Spring Clinical Meetings

Long Beach, CA

For information, please click [here](#).

SEPTEMBER 20–24, 2024

ANNA: Nephrology Nursing Summit

Atlanta, GA

For more information, please click [here](#).

OCTOBER 23–27, 2024

ASN Kidney Week 2024

San Diego Convention Center

San Diego, CA

For more information, please click [here](#).

MAY 1–4, 2025

ANNA: 2025 National Symposium

Portland, OR

For information, please click [here](#).



Please contact us if you would like to post information regarding your upcoming events or if you'd like to guest author an article for this newsletter.

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Benesch Healthcare+ Fourth Annual Nephrology and Dialysis Conference

Thursday, June 13, 2024

8:00 A.M. –5:30 P.M.

Cocktail reception to follow

Union League Club of Chicago

65 W. Jackson Blvd. | Chicago, IL 60604

Please join us for this full-day conference addressing business and legal issues facing nephrology and dialysis providers. Hear from industry leaders discussing current and future trends in care delivery, business and payment models and legal and regulatory issues.

Click [HERE](#) to register.

A block of guest rooms has been reserved for attendees at the Union League of Chicago at \$249/night + a 20% service charge. Please email the Club Services Department at clubservices@ulcc.org or contact them directly at 312.427.7800 by May 27, 2024.

Please contact MEGAN THOMAS, Director of Client Services (mthomas@beneschlaw.com) for more information about this event as well as exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities.

**No CME or CLE available.*

AGENDA

8:00–8:45

Registration and Breakfast

8:45–9:00

Introductory Remarks

SCOTT DOWNING AND JASON GREIS, Partners,
Benesch Healthcare+

9:00–9:45

News from the Hill: Renal Physicians Association Dialysis Legislative Update

ROB BLASER, Director of Public Policy,
Renal Physicians Association

9:45–10:30

Is Bigger Really Better? Exploring Physician Integration Strategies (Mergers, CINs, IPAs, ACOs and MSOs)

Moderator:

JASON GREIS, Partner, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

M. CARNEY TAYLOR, JR., M.D., M.B.A., Co-President,
Eastern Nephrology Associates

DAVID MAHVI, M.D., Chief Executive Officer, *Carolina Kidney
Partners*

MARTIN SEROTA, M.D., *Nephrology Specialty IPA*

JEFFREY GOODMAN, M.D., President, *Nephrological
Associates*

(continued on next page)

10:30–10:45 **Break**

10:45–12:00

VBC Models, What's Working Well and What's Not

Moderator:

SCOTT DOWNING, Partner, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

TIM PFLDERER, M.D., Chief Medical Officer,
Evergreen Nephrology

JOE KIMURA, Chief Medical Officer, *Somatus*

BEN KUHN, Senior Vice President of Provider Solutions,
Strive Health

AASHISH SHAH, Chief Growth Officer, *Monogram*

DAVID ARRIETA, Vice President of Physician Solutions,
Interwell Health

NIRAV VAKHARIA, M.D., Chief Medical Officer,
Panoramic Health

ALEX PORTET, Co-Chief Operating Office, *US Renal Care*

ASHLEY SNYDER, Group Vice President, *DaVita Nephrology
Practice Solutions*

12:00–1:15 **Lunch**

1:15–2:00

Optimizing VBC Models between Nephrologists and Primary Care Physicians

Moderator:

NESKO RADOVIC, Counsel, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

KELLEY CONROY, Principal, *Pinnacle Healthcare Consulting*

JONAH BROULETTE, Principal and Consulting Actuary,
Milliman

ALEXANDER LIANG, M.D., President, *Dallas Nephrology
Associates*

2:00–2:45

A Brave New World: Chronic Care Management and Remote Patient Monitoring

Moderator:

LAURI COOPER, Of Counsel, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

DAVID KURAGUNTLA, Chief Executive Officer, *Alio Medical*

NABEEL KAUKAB, Chief Executive Officer, *Jaan Health
(Phamily)*

2:45–3:00 **Break**

3:00–3:45

Noncompete Update and Case Study

Moderator:

JAKE CILEK, Partner, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

CHARLES LEUIN, Partner, *Benesch*

J. SCOTT HUMPHREY, Partner, *Benesch*

3:45–4:15

Tax Planning for All Seasons, What Physicians and Industry Executives Should Know

Moderator:

CHRIS DEGRANDE, Counsel, *Benesch Healthcare+*

Presenters:

DAVID MANDELL, JD, MDA, Partner, *OJM Group*

4:15–5:15

What's Next? Companies to Know

MANDAR GORI, Chief Marketing Officer, *AWAK
Technologies*

ROBERT PROVENZANO, M.D, Chief Executive Officer,
Innocura

NEAL PATEL, Chief Executive Officer, *Elixia*

DAVE FIRDAUS, Chief Executive Officer, *Gold Kidney
Health Plan*

TAMMY ELTZ, *NephMD Recruitment*

DAVID KURAGUNTLA, Chief Executive Officer, *Alio Medical*

5:15–6:30 **Cocktail Reception**

Please contact MEGAN THOMAS, Director of Client Services (mthomas@beneschlaw.com) for more information about this event as well as exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities.

Exhibitor and Sponsorship Opportunities
**Benesch Healthcare+ Fourth Annual
Nephrology and Dialysis Conference**

Thursday, June 13, 2024

8:00 A.M. –5:30 P.M. Cocktail reception to follow

Union League Club of Chicago

65 W. Jackson Blvd. | Chicago, IL 60604

Conference Registration \$250

Please register and pay [HERE](#).

Break Sponsorships..... \$2000 (two slots)

- Logo
- Spotlight
- 4 free registrations
- List of attendees week before

Exhibitor Space..... \$1000

- Logo
- Overview of company within handout
- 2 free conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

Breakfast Sponsor \$3500

- Logo
- Spotlight with free plug
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

Lunch Sponsor..... \$3500

- Logo
- Spotlight with free plug
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

Cocktail Reception Sponsor..... \$6000

- Logo
- Spotlight with free plug
- Decorate space with signage
- 8 conference registrations
- List of attendees week before

For more information or to sign up for an exhibitor space or sponsorship, please contact:

MEGAN THOMAS
Director of Client Services
mthomas@beneschlaw.com

March 21, 2024

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

Nephrology and Dialysis

FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Five NJ nephrology practices combine under Northeast Kidney Care banner

The combined company claims to be the largest independent group of nephrologists in the state, with 26 locations. The five entities in Northeast Kidney Care are:

1. [Nephrological Associates](#);
2. [Jersey Coast Nephrology](#);
3. [Nephrology & Hypertension Associates of New Jersey](#);
4. [Ocean Renal Associates](#); and
5. [Regional Nephrology Associates](#).

SOURCE: Northeast Kidney Care

FEBRUARY 26, 2024

Federal probe underway into possible fraud by organ procurement non-profits

U.S. attorneys in at least five states are investigating whether organizations that operate the national organ procurement system overbilled the federal government for their services. The probe, also involving investigators from HHS and the VA, is several months old, but entered a new phase when the offices and homes of 10 CEOs of organ procurement organizations were searched for evidence at the beginning of Feb. The organ procurement system came under increased scrutiny of federal lawmakers over its failure to find enough organs for the over 100,000 patients on waiting lists. Last year, Congress [passed](#) a law which ended the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network's monopoly and opened up the organ transplant system to increased competition from contractors.

SOURCE: The Washington Post

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March 21, 2024

Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

JANUARY 31, 2024

Federal judge rules former FMC nurse's class action over wages can continue

The woman sued Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) and its subsidiary Renal Care Group (RCG), alleging wage violations while working for RCG in WA and ID. FMC was successful in getting the original complaint dismissed, saying it shouldn't be held responsible for the actions of a subsidiary. However, in a ruling on the latest version of the suit, the same judge determined RCG isn't a separate entity from FMC, noting FMC was responsible for the hiring process, training and onboarding, payroll policies and schedules and assignments at RCG. The woman is seeking to represent a class of hourly, non-exempt workers subject to meal period deductions, shift differentials or COVID-19 pay during the past three years.

SOURCE: Bloomberg Law (sub. req.)

FEBRUARY 8, 2024

FMC receives premarket notification from FDA for 5008X hemodialysis system

Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) says the FDA clearance allows clinical evaluations to start in the U.S., with a planned commercial launch of the 5008X Hemodialysis System in 2025. The system and companion FX CorAL dialyzer demonstrate FMC's in medical device and membrane engineering technologies. Unlike conventional high-flux hemodialysis, which uses diffusion to remove small molecules and fluid from the blood, high-volume hemodiafiltration incorporates both diffusion and convection techniques to eliminate larger molecules. A European study demonstrated patients treated with high-volume hemodiafiltration experienced a 23% decrease in mortality rates compared to those treated with the more commonly used high-flux hemodialysis.

SOURCE: Fresenius Medical Care

FEBRUARY 5, 2024

FMC nominates six employees for supervisory board

As part of the company's change to a German stock corporation, Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) initiated a supervisory board with six shareholder representatives. To balance the board, FMC nominated six people from Germany to represent its staff: four of them are company employees, while the other two are union executives. The company's application for the judicial appointment of the six employee representatives will remain effective until completion of the election of employee representatives by the FMC workforce in Germany.

SOURCE: Fresenius Medical Care

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

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March 21, 2024

Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

JANUARY 29, 2024

Monogram Health providing kidney care to certain AZ Blue members

[Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona](#) (AZ Blue) states Nashville-based [Monogram Health](#) will assume full financial risk for members of its [Health Choice Pathway D-SNP](#) with kidney disease. AZ Blue will employ Monogram's in-home care and benefit management services which leverage a value-based model in eight AZ counties.

SOURCE: Monogram Health

FEBRUARY 26, 2024

Intermountain Health opens Spanish-language kidney transplant clinic

The clinic in Murray, UT provides Spanish speaking kidney pre-transplant patients with education and evaluation services in their own language, with access to bilingual specialists in nephrology, surgery, social work, finance and nutrition. Intermountain explains caregivers on the health transplant services team spearheaded the drive, noting patients respond more positively when engaged in a more culturally sensitive manner. The clinic also offers post-transplant services whereby Spanish speakers can receive consultations from a nephrologist and a pharmacist in their mother tongue.

SOURCE: Intermountain Health

FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Strive Health takes value-based kidney care model to OH with Medical Mutual deal

The deal links Denver-based value-based kidney care company, [Strive Health](#), with one of the largest OH-based health insurance companies, Medical Mutual. Patients with CKD and ESKD who fall under Medical Mutual's MA, individual health or commercial group health plans, will be eligible for treatment under Strive's combined in-person and telemedicine model. Up to 10,000 eligible Medical Mutual members will have access to a team of specialists. As well, Strive's machine learning technology, [CareMultiplier](#), will gather patient data with the aim of producing individualized care plans.

SOURCE: Strive Health

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March 21, 2024

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

FEBRUARY 5, 2024

Virtual care company Everly Health introducing NKF-led program for early detection of CKD

Austin, TX-based [Everly Health](#) will implement the education program through a partnership with the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). Everly, which virtually delivers disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment, will provide information about CKD, with the aim of increasing access to screening in rural and underserved communities. Everly will also expand testing for health plans and employers for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, with the suite including Heart and Kidney Health Test, Diabetes Monitoring Test, Kidney Health Test and Heart Health Test as part of preventive care screening.

SOURCE: Everly Health

JANUARY 31, 2024

Renalogic partners with TPA AmeriHealth on claims administration solution

Philadelphia's [AmeriHealth Administrators](#), one of the largest third-party administrators (TPA) in the U.S., will integrate its technology with Chicago-based [Renalogic](#)'s cost containment and care management model. Their combined expertise will enable AmeriHealth-administered group benefit plans, whether self-funded, level-funded or fully insured, to streamline delivery of dialysis benefits and reduce claims costs.

SOURCE: Renalogic

FEBRUARY 8, 2024

Baxter: Spin off of kidney care segment on track for completion by Q3

In its FY2023 financial statement, the Chicago medtech reported a 2% YoY increase in sales globally and 1% YoY in the U.S. While most business units experienced better-than-expected sales in Q4, a slight expected decline was reported in Baxter's kidney care business. The company indicated it's moving ahead with the spin-off of that unit to a standalone entity called Vantive, which is expected to be completed by July.

SOURCE: Baxter

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March 21, 2024

Nephrology and Dialysis (cont'd)

JANUARY 30, 2024

NKF funding NYC startup focused on eliminating need for immunosuppressants in kidney transplant patients

ImmunoFree is developing a stem cell transplant process that if successful, would eliminate the need for transplant recipients to take immunosuppressing drugs their entire lives so their body doesn't reject the kidney. The technology could lengthen the lifespan of a donated kidney as well as mitigate health risks associated with immunosuppression, such as cancer. Through its innovation fund, the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) is making an undisclosed investment in ImmunoFree so it can continue its R&D efforts.

SOURCE: National Kidney Foundation

FEBRUARY 14, 2024

Study determines XGBoost machine learning algorithm best at predicting early-stage CKD

Researchers at Khalifa University in the UAE investigated an explainable artificial intelligence (XAI)-based strategy to predict CKD in its early stages. It employed five machine learning (ML) methods to develop the predictive model. Of those, XGBoost performed best, accurately diagnosing CKD in 93% of cases. The study notes this ML method "is designed to build a sequence of tree models one at a time and try to fix the mistakes made by the models before them." Boosting increases the efficiency of the XGBoost algorithm and the researchers conclude it's a promising model able to integrate "the explosion of medical data and increased demand for more individualized and precise treatment."

SOURCE: Nature Scientific Reports

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

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Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs

FEBRUARY 8, 2024

[Azura notifies nearly 350K patients of data breach targeting personal information](#)

Malvern, PA-based [Azura Vascular Care](#), which operates 70 outpatient clinics and ASCs across 25 states, says the cybersecurity incident likely occurred last Sept. Patients' personal information was comprised, including names, mailing addresses, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, insurance policies, diagnoses and treatment information, as well as other demographic and contact information. The company became aware of the incident last Nov. and worked with a third-party forensic firm to investigate it. In Jan., Azura sent letters to those affected by the breach, with a list of information that was accessed.

SOURCE: Azura Vascular Care

FEBRUARY 8, 2024

[PE dealmaking in North American healthcare fell 16% YoY in 2023](#)

Pitchbook [estimates](#) in the U.S. and Canada, 2023 will have 788 PE deals across all healthcare specialties, down from 16% from the year previous and 29% fewer than the high-water mark of 1,114 PE deals recorded in 2021. Nearly all specialties saw YoY declines, including [nephrology](#). The sole exceptions noted were [cardiovascular](#), [medspa](#) and [clinical trial](#) sites.

SOURCE: Pitchbook

FEBRUARY 13, 2024

[Report: Largest ASC operators maintained market share in 2023](#)

VMG Health reports United Surgical Partners International (USPI), Surgical Care Affiliates (SCA) and AmSurg continue to lead the nation in the number of clinics operated, at 476, 320 and 250, respectively. The total of 1,046 is marginally higher from 2022's figure. Factoring in other multi-site ASC, VMG finds the number of clinics under a national operator increased by 3% per year between 2011 and 2023. The report concludes management companies' size mean they can increase value by using their leverage with commercial payors, enhancing their management and reporting capabilities and improving efficiency in staffing, supplies and administration.

SOURCE: VMG Health

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VAC, ASC and Office-Based Labs (cont'd)

FEBRUARY 22, 2024

Seattle startup secures \$5.5M in funding for vascular graft technology development

Healionics developed the STARgraft system, which uses biomaterials to create a graft that reduces the risk of occlusion or infection from synthetic blood vessels used in dialysis treatment. The company raised \$5.5 million in an equity financing round led by Keiretsu Capital and angel investors. Healionics will use the funds to complete human trials and pursue regulatory clearance and commercialization of its vascular graft.

SOURCE: Healionics

FEBRUARY 16, 2024

ASC industry insiders vow not to remove Medicare patients despite fee cuts

CMS cut physician fees by 3.4% relative to 2023, while adjusted for inflation, Medicare payments are 26% less than they were in 2001. At the same time, costs for medical practices increased YoY by 4.6%, the highest seen in 23 years. That led some practices to drop Medicare patients, however, the leaders of three ASCs have no intention of following suit. However, one points out many primary care providers are using a concierge model in which patients pay a monthly fee for access, while another notes Medicaid patients struggle with access to care and worries the same fate will befall Medicare patients if reimbursements continue to drop.

SOURCE: Becker's ASC Review

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

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March 21, 2024

Dialysis & Nephrology DIGEST

For more information regarding our nephrology, dialysis
and office-based lab experience, or
if you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact:

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lluna@beneschlaw.com or (216) 363-6199.

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