

Public Hearing Comments

ESRD Policy Petition

Presented by David Holmes, Vice President of Business Development

Good afternoon everyone. My name is David Holmes and I am here on behalf of Liberty Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services (“Liberty”). As Tim mentioned, Liberty will be submitting a petition to request a Policy to be added to the 2023 SMFP, proposed as Policy ESRD-4, which will allow for the development or expansion of a kidney disease treatment center at a skilled nursing facility.

Day in the life of nursing home dialysis patient

As Tim declared, twenty-seven (27) of Liberty’s nursing home facilities have at least one dialysis resident. The average age of a nursing home resident in our facilities is 81 years old, with most suffering from co-morbid conditions. I am going to describe to you a day in the life of the current nursing home dialysis patient. I want you to imagine yourself as a resident of a skilled nursing facility that has end-stage renal disease (ESRD), the final, permanent stage of chronic kidney disease, and now needs dialysis treatment several times a week. So the next day comes, and there is a knock at the door at 5:30 a.m. from the certified nursing assistant (CNA) saying “Good Morning Mr. Holmes, it’s time to get up and get ready for your appointment at the local dialysis center.” The CNA begins the process of getting me out of bed and dressed for my appointment. After I am up and ready, I am placed in my wheelchair and ready for transport to the outpatient dialysis center. The transportation worker escorts me to the transportation van and provides me with a light continental breakfast, usually something that is quick and easy to eat. On days that I do not have dialysis, I am able to eat a fresh, warm meal, either in my room or in the dining room with the rest of the residents. Next, I am loaded up in the van and begin my journey

to the outpatient center. This ride usually takes twenty to thirty minutes. Its 7:00 a.m., I have arrived at my designated dialysis center, and I am ready to for my appointment to start. The transportation worker helps me in the clinic and hands me my cold sandwich for lunch. Just to mention, on days where I do not have dialysis, I am able to have a warm lunch in my room or in the dining room. It is now 7:15 a.m., my dialysis treatment has started, and I will be in the outpatient center for the next four/five hours. Fast forward, it is now 12:30 p.m., my dialysis treatment is now complete, and I am ready for pickup. I am exhausted. Next in comes the transportation worker that helps me get back in my wheelchair and then loads me up into the transportation van, and our journey back to the skilled nursing facility begins. If everything goes perfect, I will arrive back at the facility around 1:00 p.m. Just as a reminder, my day started at 5:30 a.m. and I am exhausted on the days that I receive dialysis treatment. I have very little energy to participate in activities the facility offers and really feel isolated and alone. I am often not able to complete my rehab on dialysis days. If only I had the option to receive my dialysis treatment within my skilled nursing facility, I would not have to spend several hours a week traveling to the dialysis center and then the required four to five hour treatment. Dependent on what goes on in a particular day, I could be out of the facility for eight hours. If I could receive my dialysis treatment within my facility, I would have increased quality of life, allowing me the ability to participate in facility activities, as well as allow me the option to have meals with my friends or in the privacy of my own room. I know there are medical innovations for people suffering from chronic kidney disease and I hope that one day I can receive these treatments within my skilled nursing facility.