

# ATTRIBUTES OF A HOME DIALYSIS CHAMPION IN IN-CENTER DIALYSIS FACILITIES



A **Home Dialysis Champion** is a staff member (nurse, social worker, dietitian, PCT, or physician) who advocates for and supports home dialysis within an in-center dialysis facility. Their role is to increase awareness, facilitate education, and promote a culture that normalizes home dialysis as a viable option for most patients.

## 1. Knowledgeable and Skilled

- Understands all home dialysis modalities (Peritoneal Dialysis [PD] and Home Hemodialysis [HHD]) and can explain their benefits and challenges clearly to patients and staff.
- Stays current with educational resources, such as PD University, NKF, and ASN training.
- Uses decision-support tools like My Life, My Dialysis Choice to help patients align modality choice with their lifestyle.

## 2. Educator and Advocate

- Provides consistent, individualized education to patients and caregivers, in ways that are easy to understand and culturally sensitive.
- Helps staff overcome myths and misconceptions about home dialysis by using myth vs. fact sheets and success stories.
- Actively shares real patient stories to inspire interest and normalize home dialysis.

## 3. Collaborative and Team-Oriented

- Works closely with nephrologists, nurses, social workers, and technicians to identify potential home candidates.
- Builds bridges between in-center staff and the home program, fostering trust and communication.
- Encourages a “whole team” approach where every staff member sees themselves as part of home dialysis education.

## 4. Proactive in Patient Engagement

- Consistently introduces home dialysis to all patients, not just those perceived as “ideal” candidates, reframing the question to “Why shouldn’t this patient be on home dialysis?”
- Encourages peer-to-peer engagement by connecting in-center patients with home patients for mentoring.
- Promotes early and repeated conversations about home modalities throughout the patient’s care journey.

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## 5. Supportive and Empathetic

- Recognizes and addresses barriers such as housing, literacy, caregiver support, or fear of self-care.
- Works with social workers to support psychosocial needs of patients and caregivers.
- Encourages patients and families with empathy, hope, and reassurance—helping them envision a better quality of life on home dialysis.

## 6. Data-Driven and Accountable

- Helps track and share metrics on home dialysis education, referrals, interest, and transitions.
- Celebrates successes such as “graduations” to home dialysis, anniversaries, and milestones.
- Uses quality improvement strategies (Plan-Do-Study-Act) to refine educational and referral processes.

## 7. Visible and Approachable

- Identified within the facility as the “go-to” person for home dialysis questions.
- Uses visible cues (e.g., badge, “Ask Me About Home Dialysis” sticker) to prompt conversations.
- Maintains an approachable, patient-centered communication style.

## Summary

A **Home Dialysis Champion** embodies knowledge, advocacy, collaboration, empathy, and accountability. By consistently sharing education, addressing barriers, and promoting teamwork, champions help facilities shift culture toward viewing home dialysis as a standard option—not an exception.

## References

- *Home Dialysis Change Package: A Change Package to Increase Home Dialysis Use*. ESRD NCC, Updated 2024
- *Forum of ESRD Networks, Home Dialysis Toolkit (2023)*