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National Kidney Foundation (NKF) and American Society of Nephrology (ASN) Statement on Patient Access to New Drug Treatments Options
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As new therapeutic drug treatments become available to help slow the progression of kidney disease, it is important to ensure that patients have access to, and can afford, these innovations that improve clinical outcomes. The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) has long championed research and clinical trials on therapies that not only treat underlying causes of kidney disease, such as diabetes, but that specifically preserve kidney function and reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with [chronic kidney disease](#) (CKD).

Three entirely new classes of drugs now exist that can modify the progression of kidney disease. In simple terms, more interventions are available than ever before that can keep people with kidney disease alive and untethered to a [dialysis](#) machine.

[Heart disease](#) is the most common cause of death for people with kidney disease. It is more common for people with kidney disease to die of heart disease than it is for them to progress to kidney failure. Thus, classes of drugs that protect the kidney and the heart are of the utmost importance to patients. [SGLT2 inhibitors](#), [GLP-1 receptor agonists](#), and [non-steroidal mineralocorticoid receptors \(MRAs\)](#) are effective at slowing the progression of kidney disease, reducing cardiovascular events, and reducing the risk of kidney failure and death in people with kidney disease and [type 2 diabetes](#). SGLT2 inhibitors also protect the kidneys of people with CKD who do not have diabetes.

Now that several such treatments have been recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) it is imperative that the people who will benefit most—patients living with [kidney disease](#)—have access to these innovative new treatments.

NKF calls on payers, benefit managers, and physicians to ensure that these breakthrough therapies are available and accessible to kidney patients and other populations at high risk for developing kidney disease. We also urge manufacturers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to ensure that cost and affordability do not put these novel therapies out of reach for low-income and underserved populations.

Kidney Disease Facts

In the United States, 37 million adults are estimated to have [chronic kidney disease](#) (CKD)—and approximately 90 percent don't know they have it. 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. is at risk for chronic kidney disease. Risk factors for kidney disease include: [diabetes](#), [high blood pressure](#), [heart disease](#), [obesity](#), and family history. People who are Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian American, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander are at increased risk for developing the disease. Black or African American people are almost 4 times more likely than Whites to have kidney failure. Hispanic or Latino people are 1.3 times more likely than non-Hispanic or non-Latino people to have kidney failure.

Approximately 785,000 Americans have irreversible kidney failure and need dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive. More than 555,000 of these patients receive dialysis to replace kidney function and 230,000 live with a transplant. Nearly 100,000 Americans are on the waitlist for a kidney transplant right now. Depending on where a patient lives, the average wait time for a kidney transplant can be upwards of three to seven years.

About the National Kidney Foundation

[The National Kidney Foundation](#) (NKF) is the largest, most comprehensive, and longstanding patient-centric organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of kidney disease in the U.S. For more information about NKF, visit www.kidney.org.

About the American Society of Nephrology

Since 1966, ASN has been leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients. ASN has more than 21,000 members representing 131 countries. For more information, please visit www.asn-online.org or contact the society at 202-640-4660.