

Chronic Kidney Disease - Referral Management

RMG: R-0192 (AC)

[Link to Codes](#)

MCG Health
Ambulatory Care
30th Edition

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Clinical Indications

- Referral for chronic kidney disease[A] may be indicated for **1 or more** of the following(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8):
 - ☐ Emergent evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following:
 - Acute on chronic kidney disease(9)
 - Bleeding diathesis
 - Encephalopathy
 - Hyperkalemia with changes on electrocardiography(10)
 - Intoxication with dialyzable toxin (eg, lithium, salicylates)
 - Intractable acidosis
 - Intractable fluid overload
 - Mental status changes consistent with uremic encephalopathy
 - Pericarditis
 - Pregnant patient with prior kidney transplant and deteriorating kidney function(11)
 - ☐ Behavioral health referral for evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following(12)(13):
 - Anxiety(14)(15)
 - Depression(16)(17)(18)
 - Transplant candidacy
 - ☐ Cardiology referral for evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following(19)(20)(21):
 - Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring(22)
 - Antiplatelet agents(23)
 - Dyslipidemia(24)
 - Hypertension(25)(26)
 - Kidney transplant recipient candidate, and need for coronary artery disease risk assessment(27)

- Endocrinology referral for evaluation or management of diabetes mellitus(21)(25)(28)(29)(30)(31)
- ☐ General surgery referral for evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following(12)(32):
 - Peritoneal catheter placement(33)(34)
 - Vascular access placement, removal, or revision (eg, arteriovenous fistula, arteriovenous graft, tunneled hemodialysis catheter exchange or placement)(35)(36)(37)
- Genetic medicine referral for evaluation or management of underlying genetic disorder (eg, autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease)(38)(39)(40)(41)
- Hematology referral for evaluation or management of anemia if no response to therapy with iron or erythropoietic-stimulating agents, or suspected pure red cell aplasia due to erythropoietic-stimulating agents(42)
- ☐ Interventional radiology or interventional nephrology referral for evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following:
 - Kidney biopsy needed(43)
 - Peritoneal catheter placement(34)(44)
 - Renal artery stenosis, and need for stenting(19)(45)
 - Vascular access placement, removal, or revision (eg, arteriovenous graft percutaneous transluminal angioplasty, tunneled hemodialysis catheter exchange or placement)(35)(46)
- ☐ Nephrology referral for evaluation or management of **1 or more** of the following(12)(31)(40)(47)(48)(49)(50)(51):
 - Acid-base disturbances (eg, metabolic acidosis)
 - Anemia(42)(52)
 - Decrease of estimated glomerular filtration rate (GFR) of 5 mL/min/1.73m² (0.08 mL/sec/1.73m²) or more within previous year
 eGFR - Adult Calculator(38)
 - Education needed for **1 or more** of the following(53):
 - Access for hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, including timing of placement(33)
 - Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring(22)(54)
 - Avoidance of nephrotoxic medications and supplements, diagnostic agents (eg, radiocontrast agents)
 - Dietary counseling (eg, low-protein, low-sodium diet)(55)
 - Management of fluid balance
 - Renal replacement therapy, including peritoneal dialysis, home or in-center hemodialysis, nocturnal hemodialysis, and transplant(56)(57)
 - Electrolyte abnormalities (eg, hyperkalemia, hyponatremia, hypernatremia)(48)
 - Estimated GFR less than 30 mL/min/1.73m² (0.5 mL/sec/1.73m²) (ie, stage 3 chronic kidney disease)  eGFR - Adult Calculator
 - Fluid overload
 - Hematuria(38)(48)
 - Hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis initiation needed, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Cognitive impairment
 - Fluid overload (eg, resistant edema or hypertension)(58)
 - Hyperkalemia(10)
 - Metabolic acidosis
 - Pruritus(59)
 - Risk of kidney failure within 1 year is 10% to 20% or higher, using validated risk scores(60)  eGFR - Adult Calculator
 - Uremic symptoms (eg, pericarditis, encephalopathy)
 - Hereditary kidney disease(38)(48)
 - Hypertension(22)(26)(38)(47)(48)
 - Increased 5-year risk of requiring hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis (ie, greater than 3% risk using a validated risk score)

- Infant or child with chronic kidney disease
- Infant or child with polycystic kidney disease(41)(61)
- Infant or child with proteinuria (albumin to creatinine ratio of 30 mg/g (3 mg/mmol) or more, or a protein to creatinine ratio of 200 mg/g (20 mg/mmol) or more)(62)
- Infant or child with recurrent urinary tract infection
- Immunosuppressive treatment being considered (eg, glomerulonephritis secondary to systemic lupus erythematosus)
- Kidney biopsy needed(43)(63)
- Kidney outflow obstruction or congenital anomaly of the kidney or urinary tract(48)
- Kidney transplant recipient
- Malnutrition
- Medication dosing(64)
- Metabolic bone disease (eg, hyperparathyroidism)(65)
- Mineral metabolism (eg, hyperphosphatemia)(65)
- Nephritic syndrome (hematuria, proteinuria, and hypertension)(63)
- Nephrotic syndrome (hypoalbuminemia, peripheral edema, proteinuria)(48)(66)(67)(68)
- Polycystic kidney disease(41)(69)
- Pregnant patient, and management of kidney function needed(41)(63)(70)
- Proteinuria greater than 3 g/day, or urine albumin to creatinine ratio greater than 300 mg/g (30 mg/mmol)(38)(63)(71)(72)
- Recurrent nephrolithiasis(64)
- Renal artery stenosis(38)(45)
- Unknown etiology of chronic kidney disease
- Neurology referral for evaluation or management of peripheral neuropathy
- Nutrition referral for dietary counseling (eg, low-protein, low-sodium diet)(22)(55)(73)(74)
- Obstetrics referral for evaluation or management of complications of chronic kidney disease in pregnancy (eg, preeclampsia, oligohydramnios)(11)(75)
- Palliative care referral for evaluation or management of end of life in end-stage renal disease(76)
- ☐ Transplant surgery referral for initial evaluation or management of kidney transplant, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following(12)(32)(49):
 - GFR of 20 mL/min/1.73m² (0.33 mL/sec/1.73m²) or less  eGFR - Adult Calculator
 - Progressive and irreversible deterioration in renal function over previous 6 to 12 months
 - Vascular access placement, removal, or revision (eg, arteriovenous fistula, arteriovenous graft, tunneled hemodialysis catheter exchange or placement)(35)(36)(37)(77)
- Urology referral for evaluation or management of obstructive uropathy
- Vascular surgery referral for vascular access placement, removal, or revision (eg, arteriovenous fistula, arteriovenous graft, tunneled hemodialysis catheter exchange or placement)(12)(32)(35)(40)

Evidence Summary

Criteria

The evidence for the clinical indications found in this guideline includes 55 published peer reviewed articles, 14 specialty society or other evidence-based guidelines, 2 Cochrane systematic reviews, and 2 book sections.

Rationale

Use of this MCG care guideline helps the clinician identify specific complex factors of a patient's condition that may need specialist consultation. It provides evidence-based clinical criteria to help decide when a patient should be referred to a specialist, ensuring timely specialty care. Additionally, this guideline can help limit unnecessary differences in treatment, like variable criteria for emergency or subspecialist referral, thereby promoting equal access and quality of care for similar patients, regardless of location, facility, or clinician.

Related CMS Coverage Guidance

None applicable

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Footnotes

[A] A systematic review indicates that early nephrology referral (3 months or greater prior to initiation of dialysis) is associated with reduced mortality and hospitalization, better uptake of peritoneal dialysis, and earlier placement of arteriovenous fistula for hemodialysis.(1) [A in Context Link 1]

Codes

ICD-10 Diagnosis: E08.22, E09.22, E10.22, E11.22, E13.22, I12.0, I12.9, I13.0, I13.10, I13.11, I13.2, N00.A, N00.B1, N00.B2, N01.A, N02.A, N02.B1, N02.B2, N02.B3, N02.B4, N02.B5, N02.B6, N02.B9, N03.A, N04.20, N04.21, N04.22, N04.29, N04.A, N04.B1, N04.B2, N05.A, N06.20, N06.21, N06.22, N06.29, N06.A, N07.A, N07.B, N18.1, N18.2, N18.30, N18.31, N18.32, N18.4, N18.5, N18.6, N18.9, N19, N25.0, N25.81, N25.89, N25.9, N27.0, N27.1, N27.9, N99.0, R88.0, R94.4, T82.318A, T82.318D, T82.318S, T82.328A, T82.328D, T82.328S, T82.338A, T82.338D, T82.338S, T82.398A, T82.398D, T82.398S, T82.41XA, T82.41XD, T82.41XS, T82.42XA, T82.42XD, T82.42XS, T82.43XA, T82.43XD, T82.43XS, T82.49XA, T82.49XD, T82.49XS, T82.510A, T82.510D, T82.510S, T82.520A, T82.520D, T82.520S, T82.530A, T82.530D, T82.530S, T82.590A, T82.590D, T82.590S, T85.611A, T85.611D, T85.611S, T85.621A, T85.621D, T85.621S, T85.631A, T85.631D, T85.631S, T85.691A, T85.691D, T85.691S, T85.71XA, T85.71XD, T85.71XS, U09.9, Z15.3, Z49.01, Z49.02, Z49.31, Z49.32, Z84.11, Z84.19, Z91.151, Z91.158, Z91.A51, Z91.A58, Z94.0, Z99.2 [Hide]

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