



ESRD Network 9/10

# TIP Sheets

## INTRODUCTION

Adherence to treatment is not a simple issue. There is much more involved than a patient not coming to treatment or signing off early. Dialysis staff need to understand what may be involved in a patient's choice to be adherent or not to be adherent.

A thorough assessment is the first step to understanding if there are external or internal issues that may affect adherence. Knowledge about the patient's lifestyle, coping methods, past experiences with compliance, including school and work attendance, are part of the factors that will help staff know if there are potential "red flags."

The patient's mental health also may play a role in the patient's ability to be adherent. If a patient is depressed, just coming to treatment may seem to be an insurmountable task. The patient may have a high level of anxiety, a phobia that needs to be addressed, or other issues that contribute to non-adherent behavior.

The patient also needs to understand what the treatment regime is in order to be adherent and needs to feel comfortable with asking questions. If there are communication barriers, either educational or cultural, the patient may lack the knowledge or the experience that would promote adherence.

The following tip sheets on *Patient Assessment*, *Effective Health Communication*, and *Cultural Competency* may be helpful as you review the potential reasons patients may be non-adherent and as you develop a program to promote adherence. The tip sheets were developed by ESRD Network 15 and are modified/reprinted with their permission.

**Serving the Renal Community in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio.**

911 E. 86<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 202, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-1858  
Phone: (317) 257-8265 ♦ 1(800) 456-6919 ♦ FAX: (317) 257-8291  
Email: [info@nw10.esrd.net](mailto:info@nw10.esrd.net) ♦ Web: [www.therenalnetwork.org](http://www.therenalnetwork.org)