

Is this discharge a Lost to Follow-Up or a Discontinued Treatment?

Case Scenarios	Correct EQRS Discharge
The patient has stopped arriving for scheduled treatments with no prior notification and the facility is unable to locate the patient.	Lost to Follow-Up (LTFU)
A patient has chosen to stop dialysis and has not died within 30 days of stopping treatment at your facility.	Discontinued Treatment
A patient is having a prolonged hospitalization or rehabilitation stay and event exceeds 30 days.	Transferred to Hospital
A patient notified the facility that they were planning to leave the country. Patient leaves the country without informing the facility, but family member reports patient is not returning.	Other
Patient is imprisoned.	Other

2746 Responsibility of the Facility

The ESRD facility that was last responsible for a patient's ongoing care is responsible for completing and submitting the [CMS-2746](#) form if:

- A patient discontinues treatment and dies within 30 days.
- A patient dies within 30 days after being admitted to hospice, a hospital, long term care facility, nursing home or rehab.

Lost to Follow-Up (LTFU)

Facility staff must document every effort to locate a patient within 30 days since the last treatment. A patient can be classified as Lost to Follow-Up (LTFU) if the patient did not convey their intention of discontinuing treatment at the facility and the facility has made the following attempts to reach the patient without success:

- Communicated with the patient's emergency contacts (ie. family, caregiver, or friend) and they have no direct knowledge of the patient's status/location.
- Reached out to the patient's nephrologist to confirm if the patient has been in touch with their office.
- Contacted area hospitals the patient is known to have been previously admitted to or hospitals near the patient's home or place of work.
- Facility staff has not been contacted by a hospital or another dialysis center reporting the patient is receiving treatment.
- A certified letter has been sent to the patient and there is no acknowledgment or response from the patient.
- A wellness check was conducted at the patient's last known address and the patient was not found.

Process for Reporting Lost to Follow-Up (LTFU)

- ✓ Inform the Network of any potential LTFU within 30 days of the patient's last treatment.
- ✓ After 30 days of missing treatment and the facility makes every effort to locate the patient without success, you may discharge patient as "Lost to Follow Up" in the End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Reporting System (EQRS) as of the last day of treatment.
- ✓ Send one final certified letter to the patient's last known address. The letter should include the patient's official discharge date from the facility with guidance to seek care at a hospital.

Discontinued Treatment

Per the conditions for coverage, a patient has the right to:

"be informed about and participate, if desired, in all aspects of their care, and be informed of the right to refuse treatment, to discontinue treatment..." (494.70 Condition: Patients' rights V456)

In addition, a patient has the responsibility to:

"tell their health care team if they refuse any treatment or medicine that the doctor has ordered" (Network Rights & Responsibilities)

Therefore, a patient can decide to discontinue treatment at any time, but should also inform facility staff of their decision.

A patient can be discharged as Discontinuing Treatment if:

- ✓ The patient and/or an assigned family member/caregiver provides written notification to the facility.
- ✓ The patient verbally conveys to the staff the decision to terminate treatment and stops showing up for care.
- ✓ The patient ignores all staff communication attempts, but family or the patient confirms refusal to return to the facility.

In the event that a patient is classified as having Discontinued Treatment, the facility staff should document:

- ✓ All efforts made by the healthcare team to determine if there are any improvements that could affect the patient's decision, such as:
 - addressing concerns with current treatment
 - informing patient about all available treatment options
 - evaluating patient's mental and physical wellbeing
 - revisiting the patient's Life Plan – Plan of Care
- ✓ Signed letter or verbal acknowledgement by patient (caregiver/family member - if applicable)
- ✓ Follow up interventions and communications
- ✓ Assessment for depression and/or referral (as indicated)
- ✓ Physician notification / involvement in the decision

Process for Reporting Discontinued Treatment

- ✓ After 30 days of missing treatment, discharge the patient in EQRS using the discharge reason of "**Discontinued Treatment.**"
- ✓ If patient provides verbal/written notice:
 - No need to wait 30 days. Enter patient as "**Discontinued**" in EQRS as of the last date of treatment.
 - Follow up within 30 days of discharge with the patient/family regarding health status.

If you have any questions or need clarification with a specific case, please call the Network.



PO Box 845 • Hightstown, NJ 08520
Phone: 609.490.0310 • Patient Toll Free: 888.877.8400 • Fax: 609.490.0835
www.qirn3.org