

American Kidney Fund Completes Pilot Program with Cricket Health Online Platform to Enhance Kidney Care Management

Renal diet found to be most frequently discussed topic

ROCKVILLE, MD, UNITED STATES, December 11, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Patients who enrolled in a pilot program to test an online kidney care platform demonstrated a high level of engagement with the technology and used the platform to find information about disease management as well as to find emotional support from peer-to-peer interactions.



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LaVarne A. Burton

Beginning in late June, 86 chronic kidney disease (CKD) and end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients from the American Kidney Fund's (AKF) patient network enrolled, at no cost, into Cricket Health's online kidney care platform. The platform connected them and their loved ones to structured, multi-channel educational content, virtual healthcare expertise and a community of peers and patient mentors.

Cricket Health's analysis of platform use by AKF patients showed that over 73 percent of users engaged with educational content on the site, and 81 percent took advantage of the platform's chat functions. Patients engaged with Cricket's multidisciplinary care team, including a registered nurse, social worker, renal dietitian and pharmacist. Diet was the most frequently discussed topic in the AKF group, followed by dialysis access and medications/lab results.

“Our partnership with Cricket Health has given us valuable insights into how kidney patients might use technology to manage their condition and find support,” said LaVarne A. Burton, AKF president and CEO. “These insights will help inform AKF's ongoing development of programs and services for patients.”

Participants represented CKD stages 3-5, as well as ESRD patients being treated with in-center hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis. Participants came from 35 states and Puerto Rico and included working professionals, retirees, and primary caregivers.

Patients reported high levels of satisfaction with the Cricket Health platform. Having online access to a nurse to answer their questions about diet and medication was cited as a key benefit of the platform, as was the patient chat room where they could ask questions and discuss topics with other patients. In addition to information about disease management, patients found emotional support.

“Thank you for chatting with me,” said one patient after a chat with the Cricket Nurse. “Tomorrow is kidney doctor day when I will get my new numbers. The days before the [doctor] visit are usually glum but our conversation has kept me out the pits.”

“I am so glad you sent me to the Cricket [patient] group,” said the participant. “I have learned so much from reading the posts in the different topics. It is truly a cure for feeling like you are the only person on the planet with CKD/ESRD.”

“Managing advanced chronic kidney disease and dialysis is often an overwhelming, scary experience for patients, but the Cricket Health platform and community of support—from clinicians, mentors, and fellow patients—can go a long way toward empowering patients, giving them confidence and hope,” said Arvind Rajan, cofounder and CEO of Cricket Health. “We’re grateful to the AKF for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of members of the AKF patient network.”

About the American Kidney Fund

As the nation’s leading nonprofit working on behalf of the 30 million Americans with kidney disease, the American Kidney Fund is dedicated to ensuring that every kidney patient has access to health care, and that every person at risk for kidney disease is empowered to prevent it. AKF provides a complete spectrum of programs and services: prevention outreach, top-rated health educational resources, and direct financial assistance enabling 1 in 5 U.S. dialysis patients to access lifesaving medical care, including dialysis and transplantation. AKF holds the highest ratings from the nation’s charity watchdog groups, including Charity Navigator, which includes AKF on its “top 10” list of nonprofits with the longest track records of outstanding stewardship of the donated dollar, and GuideStar, which has awarded AKF its Platinum Seal of Transparency.

For more information, please visit KidneyFund.org, or connect with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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