

**Information included with this report:**

- ESRD Network 15 Summary Report #5
- ESRD Network 15 Facility-Specific Feedback Report #5
- SIMS generated Facility-Specific Reports to Date



**FISTULA FIRST**  
National Vascular Access  
Improvement Initiative

October 2003 –December 2004  
Q4 Reports

# Fistula First Report Update

## Let your data guide your improvement!

### What's new with these reports?

On your facility-specific charts you will notice that a **median** line has been added to represent the center of your data. This will allow you to better evaluate the flow of the data, see non-random patterns, and observe changes over time. It will also help you gauge whether the changes you have made have resulted in an improvement and whether the change is sustainable.

### Why did we add a “median” instead of a “mean”?

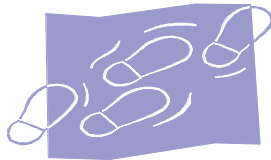
A “median” is physically the middle number in a series of numbers. It has the same number of points equal to or above it as it has equal to it or below it. It is not the average (mean) of the data. Unlike the “mean” the “median” is not influenced by “outliers” in the data.

### What are we trying to accomplish with this new format?

We have changed the report format to allow you to better gauge whether your AV Fistula (AVF) rates are really improving or just showing normal variation.

### Have the targets changed?

No, the targets remain the same. The Network 15 CMS target for AVF use is 42.5% by June 2006. However, the Medical Review Board of Network 15 challenges each of our facilities to obtain an AVF use rate for prevalent dialysis patients of 60% by 2006 and 66% by 2009. Best practice facilities (in large facilities, with similar patient demographics) have attained rates of 80-90%.



## Step-by-Step Guide for Reviewing your AVF Data

### First the basics . . .

Look at your data and make a notation on the vertical axis of your charts whenever you implement a change intended to help improve your AVF rates. Next, look at the data following the change to see if your rates improved.

**Example:** Your plan is to improve communication with the surgeons who place AVFs for your patients. You started sharing your fistula data with your surgeon in August. You notice a 5% increase in your AVF rates in the month following the “data sharing.” How can you tell if this improvement was the result of your effort or just by chance?

The following page lists 4 simple steps to set you on your way to analyzing your own AVF data. The steps are easy to follow and can help you determine whether you are making real improvements in AVF rates or just experiencing “normal variation” of your data. All four steps are used every time you analyze a chart. If you identify any of the four, it means that you might have had a significant change in your data. These steps were adapted from a presentation by Sandra K. Murray, MA RD of Corporate Transformation Concepts in Eugene, OR (541)-607-8702.

