



PRESS RELEASE

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HHS AND THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY ANNOUNCE EIGHT WINNERS IN ROUND 1 OF THE KIDNEYX COVID-19 KIDNEY CARE CHALLENGE

The \$300,000 challenge has identified creative solutions that reduce risk during the pandemic

Washington, DC (January 29, 2021) —Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) announced [eight winners in Round 1 of the KidneyX COVID-19 Kidney Care Challenge](#). Entrants from research centers, hospitals, and dialysis centers identified solutions to reduce the transmission of coronavirus among people with kidney disease and/or reduce the risk of kidney damage among people who contract the virus.

“We congratulate the Round 1 winners who have highlighted approaches to patient monitoring, patient education, and vaccine distribution,” said HHS Acting Assistant Secretary for Health Rear Admiral Felicia Collins, MD, MPH. “We look forward to the subsequent round of rapid-response innovation that supports COVID-19 risk reduction in kidney patients and health professionals during the pandemic.”

Each winner will receive \$20,000. The winners are:

- **Alio.** Remote monitoring platform to reduce COVID-19 risk for hemodialysis patients.
- **Canopy.** A transparent, reusable respirator with interchangeable filter cores and a silicone face seal.
- **Docola.** Web-based learning platform with chronic kidney disease and COVID-19 patient education resources.
- **Gretta Weindorf, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC; Kidney Care Specialists.** Rooming approach for dialysis facilities to minimize the COVID-19 exposure risk in the waiting room.

- **Lama Nazzal, M.D., M.S.; New York University School of Medicine.** Mixed-methods approach to characterizing the determinants of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among a diverse population of patients with kidney failure.
- **Minority Organ And Tissue Transplant Educational Program Of Cleveland.** COVID-19 pandemic education kits distributed at dialysis care facilities in areas with a high social vulnerability index.
- **Northwest Kidney Centers.** Retrofitted, freezer-equipped, mobile immunization units to provide vaccines in urban, suburban, and rural settings.
- **The Rogosin Institute.** Virtual peritoneal dialysis training to minimize potential COVID-19 exposure.

"The pandemic has forced people living with kidney diseases and those who care for them to go through extraordinary measures to continue life-saving treatment," said John Sedor, MD, FASN, Chair, KidneyX Steering Committee. "Through the COVID-19 Kidney Care Challenge, KidneyX seeks to improve the safety of patients, caregivers, and kidney care teams — particularly in communities already disproportionately affected by kidney disease."

KidneyX published [detailed summaries of the winning solutions](#), including considerations for implementation and adaptation. Winners of the second round are anticipated to be announced in February 2021.

Learn more about the COVID-19 Kidney Care Challenge at kidneyx.org.

About KidneyX

The Kidney Innovation Accelerator (KidneyX), a public-private partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN), is accelerating innovation in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases. KidneyX seeks to improve the lives of people with kidney disease by expediting the development of drugs, devices, biologics, and other therapies across the spectrum of kidney care.

KidneyX has already completed three competitions, awarding \$4 million in prizes: the [Patient Innovator Challenge](#) and Redesign Dialysis [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#). These competitions sought to improve the quality of life for people with kidney failure by improving current dialysis treatment through innovations that reduce infection risk,

improve vascular access, and replace kidney functions. The \$10 million [Artificial Kidney Prize](#), a competition to accelerate artificial kidney development toward human clinical trials, is accepting Phase 1 submissions until March 24, 2021.

For more information, visit kidneyx.org.

About the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) enhances and protects the health and well-being of all Americans. HHS fulfills that mission by providing for effective health and human services and fostering advances in medicine, public health, and social services. For more information, visit hhs.gov.

About the American Society of Nephrology

Since 1966, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) has been leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients. ASN has more than 21,000 members representing 131 countries. For more information, visit asn-online.org.

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