News from the NHSN Help Desk
How to Correctly Complete a Denominators for Dialysis Event Form

Every month as part of Dialysis Event Surveillance, facilities are required to electronically submit a "Denominators for Dialysis Event Surveillance" form in NHSN. The denominators (or "patient census") estimate the number of patient-months at risk for dialysis events by counting patients who received hemodialysis in the outpatient facility during the 1st and 2nd working day of the month.

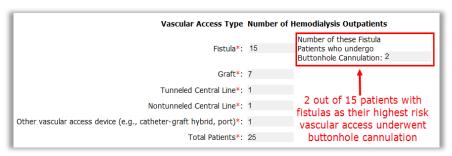When counting the monthly denominators, follow these instructions:

1. **Tally the number of hemodialysis outpatients present on the first two working days of the month.**
   - ➢ **Include** transient patients and all patients who received in-center hemodialysis as outpatients at your clinic.
   - ➢ **Exclude** patients who were hospitalized or missed their scheduled treatment.
   - ➢ See the *Working Days Calendar* example on the next page for guidance on defining "working days."

2. **Do not include peritoneal dialysis patients in the monthly denominator count.** NHSN Dialysis Event Surveillance is limited to hemodialysis patients only.
   - ➢ Include these patients in the monthly denominator count if they receive hemodialysis on the 1st or 2nd working day of the month. Count them by their highest risk vascular access present, not the peritoneal catheter.

3. If a patient has more than one vascular access, **count that patient only once, by the highest risk vascular access present**, even if that vascular access is not used for dialysis or is abandoned/non-functional.

Lower Risk → Higher Risk: Fistulas, Grafts, Other Vascular Access Devices (e.g., catheter-graft hybrids, ports), Tunneled Central Lines, Nontunneled Central Lines

4. **Use the "Other Vascular Access Devices" category** for catheter-graft hybrids, ports, and any other vascular access devices that do not meet the NHSN definitions for fistula, graft, or central line. **Do not** classify peritoneal catheters under the "Other Vascular Access Device."

Vascular Access Type	Number of Hemodialysis Outpatients
Fistula*:	15
Graft*:	7
Tunneled Central Line*:	1
Nontunneled Central Line*:	1
Other vascular access device (e.g., catheter-graft hybrid, port)*:	1
Total Patients*:	25

Number of these Fistula Patients who undergo Buttonhole Cannulation: 2

2 out of 15 patients with fistulas as their highest risk vascular access underwent buttonhole cannulation

5. **Don't forget about buttonholes!** Some fistula patients undergo buttonhole cannulation. Among the "fistula" patients reported, indicate the number who are buttonhole patients on the denominator form.

6. **Check off the appropriate "Report No Events" boxes on the denominator form** to confirm zero dialysis events occurred during the month. If one or more dialysis events has been reported during the month, the corresponding checkbox(es) will be greyed-out and will not be available to check off on the denominator form while in edit mode.

Report No Events
No **IV antimicrobial start** events: ☐
No **Positive blood culture** events: ☑
No **Pus, redness or increased swelling at vascular access site** events: ☑

   ➢ These boxes become available on the first day of the following month – this is the earliest possible day to verify that no events occurred at any time during the preceding month.

'Q' from the Queue:

"First two working days of the month"? Can I just pick 2 days during the month when patients receive treatment?
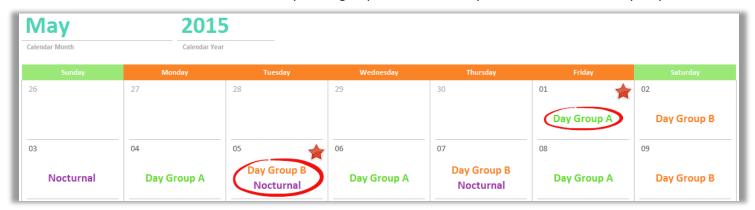
No, do not choose random days to tally the monthly denominator. Surveillance must be conducted according to the protocol so that everyone participating is using a standardized method to collect data.

Check out the _Working Days Calendar_ below to understand how to identify the first two working days of the month for facilities that provide nocturnal hemodialysis.

Example Scenario: Three distinct patient groups each dialyze on different days of the month. Patients in Daytime Group A dialyze on M/W/F. Patients in Daytime Group B dialyze on T/Th/Sa. Patients in Nocturnal Group C are dialyzed on T/Th/Su.

What are the first two working days of the month? Friday, May 1st and Tuesday, May 5th

Why? Friday and Tuesday are the first days of the month that would collectively capture all three patient groups scheduled for dialysis. As a result, all patients who are present for their scheduled hemodialysis treatment session have the opportunity to be captured in the denominator. Saturday and Sunday are not considered working days by themselves in this scenario because at least 1 patient group would be entirely missed from the monthly tally.

May 2015

Calendar Month   Calendar Year

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	01 ★ Day Group A	02 Day Group B
03 Nocturnal	04 Day Group A	05 ★ Day Group B Nocturnal	06 Day Group A	07 Day Group B Nocturnal	08 Day Group A	09 Day Group B

Working Days Calendar (above)

Questions about NHSN? Email the NHSN helpdesk at nhsn@cdc.gov with "Dialysis" in the subject line and we will respond to your inquiry within 5 business days.