

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

While much measurable progress has been made, the kidney disease epidemic remains the 9th leading cause of death in America, putting an enormous strain on our healthcare system. To address this crisis head on, it is critical to continue focusing on earlier diagnosis, prevention, and innovative approaches to treatment. Increased access to living organ donations and critical medications must also be a top priority. We must address the care needs across the entire continuum with a comprehensive, bold framework for tackling kidney disease. And, over the past year, the broader kidney community has worked diligently to develop such a framework as a priority focus of Kidney Care Partners.

Since our founding in 2003, Kidney Care Partners (KCP) has grown to consist of 34 organizations representing the broad spectrum of kidney care in America, including researchers, clinicians, providers, patient advocates, and manufacturers. The unified focus on the needs of individuals with kidney disease and the diversity of Kidney Care Partners is our strength.

Our community has a history of challenging ourselves to do better, as evidenced by our collaborative work with policymakers and key stakeholders on meaningful programs and policies to improve the lives of individuals living with kidney disease, kidney failure, and transplants. Today, thanks to rapid advancements in kidney care, individuals with kidney diseases are living longer and fuller lives, enjoying expanded access to care, and spending less time in hospitals--generating billions of dollars in savings to our nation's health care system. But we also know there is still much more work to do.

KCP recognizes the epidemic of chronic kidney disease and is committed to focusing on the continuum of this condition. This vision and commitment are captured in **Kidney Care FIRST: A Framework for Improving Renal Disease Support & Treatment**.

This important framework - or roadmap - represents a broad, renewed vision of the future of kidney care in America and policy priorities that focus on the full spectrum of the kidney disease cycle from prevention to transplant for individuals living with kidney disease. The policy priorities in the framework focus on promoting awareness and prevention; patient empowerment; improving quality and access to care for patients; and, increasing investment in research and innovation in care.

We look forward to working collaboratively with our nation's policymakers and stakeholders on **Kidney Care FIRST's** recommendations that can be addressed in legislative and regulatory efforts or community engagement opportunities. KCP is committed to our shared goal of significantly improving the lives of individuals with kidney disease and kidney failure in America and ensuring our nation's healthcare delivery system provides the access, choice, and innovations needed to get there together.

Allen R. Nissenson, MD
CHAIR, KIDNEY CARE PARTNERS