

# Press Release

## **Reliability Center, Inc. is Selected as the Root Cause Analysis Expert for Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative Contract**

**Hopewell, VA, April 8, 2009:** The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has awarded the Mid-Atlantic Renal Coalition (MARC), ESRD Network 5, a contract to direct the national Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative (FFBI). MARC has selected Robert J. Latino, CEO, Reliability Center, Inc. to serve as the Root Cause Analysis (RCA) Expert to facilitate the team of Subject Matter Experts.

The FFBI began in 2003 as a collaborative among the 18 ESRD Networks and renal community partners to increase the percentage of patients who receive hemodialysis with an arterio-venous fistula (AVF). Fistulas have long been recognized as the “gold standard” for establishing access to a patient’s circulatory system to provide life-sustaining dialysis.

The goal of the RCA team is to better understand why decisions are being made to use access placement other than AVF. As of January 2009 the national AVF prevalence rate was 51.8%. The FFBI goal is to achieve a rate of 66% AVFs for prevalent hemodialysis patients. “The challenge for the RCA team will be to get deep into the decision-making process involved at the care provider/patient level and truly understand why decision makers would choose access placement alternatives other than AVF” said Robert Latino. While this is seemingly easy to surmise, just over half of the eligible patients are choosing AVF. “True RCA is a disciplined process that drills down beneath the actual decision maker and identifies the organizational systems that provide the information to them in order to make better decisions. Oftentimes these information systems are inadequate, obsolete or non-existent and result in providing us inaccurate information in which to make an informed decision”, said Latino.

Reliability Center, Inc. is committed to working with MARC and CMS to ensure that all eligible patients for AVF are provided the most accurate and up-to-date information available so that they can make informed decisions about their care and well-being.