Dialysis Assessment and Response Tool (DART) for Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

The DART tool is used to systematically assess an outpatient hemodialysis facility's IPC practices and guide quality improvement activities (e.g., by addressing identified gaps).

This comprehensive tool is intended to help assess IPC practices in the outpatient hemodialysis setting. The tool includes a series of modules that individuals performing the assessment may use depending on the focus of the assessment. Modules can be selected based on allotted time, facility-specific concerns, or applicability to an organism of concern.

Steps to a DART

1. Contact the facility to schedule the DART
2. Conduct the DART
3. Provide feedback to the facility
4. Follow-up on DART feedback implementation

In most instances, the steps in conducting a DART involve scheduling the DART, conducting the DART with the preconstructed tool to guide the assessment, providing both verbal and written feedback to the facility, and then following up to review the facility's implementation of the suggested actions, as needed.

The facilitator guide format contains both the question and answer choices as well as the recommended IPC practice(s) based upon current CDC guidance. By having ready access to the recommended practice(s), the facilitator may provide immediate verbal feedback and recommendations to the facility during the assessment.

The tool is divided into sections:

Section 1: Collects facility demographics and critical infrastructure information and is intended for completion by the facility prior to the DART (provided as a separate document to send to facility). These questions often require that the facility look up answers or consult with staff members and thus pre-collection often saves time during the actual assessment. The DART facilitator should decide if any of the responses need to be verbally reviewed or require further explanation at the beginning of the assessment. If no further clarification is needed, then the facilitator should start on the next section and refer to this section as needed.

Section 2: Includes **8** assessment modules for review during a discussion of policies and practices with the facility. These sections cover a variety of infection prevention practices in multiple parts.

Part A: Is intended for use during interviews with the dialysis facility's leadership. The questions are formatted to include:

- Closed-ended questions with "yes/no" response options
- Open-ended questions which prompt more descriptive responses
  - » For the open-ended questions, common responses are often listed below each question to aid in data collection but may contain answers that would not be considered a recommended IPC practice. The facilitator guide should be consulted for the recommended IPC practice

Part B: Is intended to guide general observations of facility and staff practices, including options to interact with staff to obtain responses. Part B includes observational items that aren't covered in the standardized observations that make up Part C.

Part C: Is intended for use during observations of infection prevention practices. Part C uses evidence-based, standardized observation tools specific to the dialysis setting.

Helpful Tips When Conducting DARTs:

- Review and become familiar with the DART tools before entering the facility
  - » Know the recommended IPC practices for each question
  - » Be aware of any variations in State and Local regulations
  - » Shadow someone with experience performing DARTs before conducting one by yourself
- Request the facility complete the demographics section prior to the DART to save time during the visit
- Be flexible during the DART

    - » Identify which areas/topics may need to be prioritized
        - – Review the demographics form
        - – Discuss facility success and challenges
- At the beginning of the DART, let the facility know specific processes you would like to observe and ask when the best time would be to observe each practice (station cleaning, catheter connection, etc.)
- For large facilities, it may be helpful to conduct DARTs in teams. Examples include one DART facilitator conducting the interview, while another conducts observations, or two DART facilitators conducting the interview portions together, but then splitting up and conducting different observations simultaneously.

The Dialysis Safety Team within the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion can provide training to public health jurisdictions on the use of the tool. For more information contact, **dialysiscoalition@cdc.gov.**