DaVita CathAway Program Leads to Lower Catheter Rates in Hemodialysis Patients

Preferred access choice vital in improving patient health

DENVER, Jul 13, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- DaVita Inc. (NYSE: DVA), a leading provider of kidney care services for those diagnosed with end stage renal disease (ESRD) and chronic kidney disease (CKD), today announced that the company has made landmark progress in reducing "Day 90+" patient central venous catheter (CVC) rates, further cementing its position as the industry leader among large dialysis organizations in catheter reductions through the placement of permanent accesses.

"The success of our catheter-reduction program is a huge accomplishment for our teammates and physician partners," explains Dr. Allen R. Nissenson, DaVita's chief medical officer. "Decreasing patients' chances of infection, thrombosis, hospitalization and death are the driving forces behind this outstanding continuous quality improvement program."

In 2008, DaVita® established CathAway(TM), the company's seven-step program for reducing the number of hemodialysis patients with catheters. Since the inception of the program, DaVita has witnessed a **30 percent** reduction in the number of "Day 90+" patients (i.e., those patients who have been dialyzing at DaVita for 90 days or more) using a catheter for dialysis access and the company is now at an all-time low catheter rate. This has been DaVita's most significant clinical initiative in the past two years.

Through DaVita's CathAway program, a multidisciplinary team including nephrologists, surgeons and clinical teammates helps patients transition from catheters to fistulas as the means of dialysis access. Kidney and hemodialysis experts consider the fistula - a surgically connected passageway between an artery and a vein that can be used as an access point for dialysis treatments - the "gold standard" access choice, and research studies have demonstrated patients with fistulas have the fewest complications, such as infections and clotting, compared to all other hemodialysis access choices.

By optimizing the access through which our patients receive dialysis, DaVita physicians and teammates have helped patients stay out of the hospital, take fewer medications, increase their quality of life and even prolong their lives.

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About DaVita

DaVita Inc., a Fortune 500® company, is a leading provider of kidney care in the United States, delivering dialysis services and education to patients with chronic kidney failure and end stage renal disease. As of March 31, 2011, DaVita operated or provided administrative services at 1,642 dialysis facilities, serving approximately 128,000 patients. DaVita develops, participates in and donates to numerous programs dedicated to transforming communities and creating positive, sustainable change for children, families and our environment. The company's leadership development initiatives and corporate social responsibility efforts have been recognized by *Fortune*, *Modern Healthcare*,*Newsweek* and *WorldBlu*, among others. For more information, please visit http://www.davita.com.

SOURCE: DaVita

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