



2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201-1708

September 18, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrators, Hospitals and Renal Dialysis Facilities

FROM: Dennis L. Gibbs, Director
Division of Health Licensing

SUBJECT: HBsAb Testing

Section 409.D of Regulation 61-97, *Standards for Licensing Renal Dialysis Facilities*, requires hepatitis B testing for patients and staff of outpatient (OP) renal dialysis facilities within one month prior to admission.

In a memorandum dated September 17, 1999, this Department published a provider-wide exception to Section 409.D, which more specifically required the OP facility to conduct a baseline check for patients for hepatitis B surface antibodies (HBsAb), as well as hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg),

In a recent situation, a hospital treating a patient in its inpatient renal dialysis unit wished to discharge the patient and recommend that hemodialysis be resumed at an OP facility, but was unable to do so due to the requirement of Section 409 that requires the HBsAb testing to be conducted within one month prior to admission to the OP facility, and that testing had not been accomplished.

It has been determined by this Department that since HBsAb is not an active disease process (but simply that which determines the presence of an antibody), the HBsAb testing may be conducted up to one month after admission to the OP facility. HBsAg testing, however, still must be conducted within one month prior to admission to the OP facility.

If there are questions, please call Suzanne Hicks or Rob Lawyer at 803-545-4370.

DLG/GRM/gm

cc: Suzanne Hicks
Jerry Paul
Flo Tumbokon
Rob Lawyer