



DPC Advocacy Day 2025 When Patients Lead, Policy Listens



By Yolonda Brisbane,
DPC Grassroots Manager

From July 12–15, 2025, the nation's capital was infused with a powerful sense of purpose and unity as Dialysis Patient Citizens (DPC) welcomed 36 extraordinary Patient Ambassadors—dialysis patients, transplant recipients, and family members of those living with or lost to End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)—to Washington, D.C. for our Annual Congressional Advocacy Day.

Our time together began with preparation and purpose. Patient Ambassadors entered a space of belonging that offered state-of-the-art meeting rooms and delicious kidney-friendly meals—nourishing both body and spirit. This setting became the heart of meaningful conversations, new friendships, and genuine camaraderie.

We deepened our work through community-building and in-depth advocacy training, led by our expert partners at Advocacy Associates, a former official from the Department of Health and Human Services, and a Capitol Hill staff member. Ambassadors gained valuable policy knowledge, and tools to elevate their voices—to tell their stories in ways that educated, inspired, and motivated.

Moreover, the training equipped our Patient Ambassadors to confidently participate in 85 coordinated meetings with congressional leaders and staff, representing 24 states, bringing the voice of the ESRD community directly to our nation's policy makers.

Beyond the training and advocacy work, Patient Ambassadors enjoyed exploring Washington, D.C.—taking in its historic landmarks, vibrant culture, and local cuisine. For many, it was also their

very first opportunity to experience the nation's capital, making the trip both impactful and unforgettable.

Determined to protect access to dialysis care, Patient Ambassadors championed the RESTORE Act (H.R. 2199 / S. 1173) and raised awareness of the soon-to-be-introduced Kidney Care Access Protection Act (KCAPA). They also encouraged lawmakers to join the House Kidney Caucus, helping amplify the voice of the ESRD community and Dialysis Patient Citizen's commitment to building meaningful relationships with our leaders on Capitol Hill.

"This work is important to me due to the high numbers in kidney disease and chronic health conditions overall. One voice can have an impact, but many voices together, leads to action."
— Porthea Dennis, Ohio Patient Ambassador



Health and Hospitality Dignity in Every Detail

To ensure everyone could participate fully and safely, 12 in-center dialysis patients received treatment at DaVita Union Plaza, our host dialysis center in D.C. Thanks to the exceptional staff, patients received continued care that allowed them to remain engaged throughout the event without missing a beat.

"I have dealt with kidney disease my entire life and Advocacy gives my life purpose. I can meet with people who are going through similar things, and we are changing the lives of dialysis and kidney patients by fighting for them and making a difference with Congress." — Kendra Deike, Iowa Patient Ambassador



Our Work Does Not Stop at Advocacy Day

DPC keeps the empowerment and energy going year-round through monthly events—open to anyone who wants to learn, connect, and be part of a community that truly reflects the patient voice. Our Kidney Chat Support Calls, Patient Ambassador Meetings, Facebook Live sessions with Dr. Velma Scantlebury, and our Facebook Live Roundtable Talk Series all offer connection, support, and information for patients, families, and care partners. Even in these spaces, our Patient Ambassadors serve and lead.

In addition, our Patient Ambassadors work with our public relations partners at Firehouse Strategies to write Letters to the Editor and have them published in their local newspapers—bringing awareness about kidney disease to their respective communities and lawmakers.

To every Ambassador who traveled to D.C., told your story, and stood proudly in your truth—thank you. You are the heart of this work, your voice is the difference, and it is my honor to serve alongside you.

To learn more about Dialysis Patient Citizens, or join our membership and Patient Ambassador community, contact us at 866-877-4242 or www.dialysispatients.org. There is a space for your voice and your story.

