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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LA General Medical Center Cuts Hospital Stay for Uninsured Hemodialysis Patients by Over Five Days—  
First Program of Its Kind Authorized by California Department of Public Health**

**Los Angeles, CA — November 19, 2025** — Los Angeles General Medical Center has launched a groundbreaking hemodialysis program that has reduced the average hospital stay for uninsured patients by more than five days, marking a first-of-its-kind initiative authorized by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

Launched in February 2020, the program allows uninsured patients beginning hemodialysis (HD) to temporarily receive outpatient-level dialysis in the hospital's inpatient HD unit while their insurance applications are processed. Previously, uninsured patients faced prolonged hospitalizations because outpatient HD centers could not accept them until coverage was secured.

"Nearly one in five patients admitted to LA General arrive without insurance," said Jorge Orozco, CEO of LA General. "CDPH's authorization allowed us to safely provide transitional dialysis, reducing hospital stays and helping patients return home faster, with dignity and support."

**Study Findings**

- The average length of stay at LA General dropped from 13.0 days to 7.6 days—a reduction of 5.4 days (p < 0.001).
- Control hospitals within the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services network saw smaller reductions of less than three days using emergency department-based transitional dialysis.
- No increase in 30-day readmissions or mortality was observed, confirming the program's safety.

"This program demonstrates how thoughtful regulatory flexibility can improve patient outcomes, reduce costs, and enhance the healthcare experience," said Dr. Brad Spellberg, Chief Medical Officer at LA General.

**Patient Perspective: Michael Varnal**

Michael Varnal, a retired Emergency Medical Technician and member of LA General's Patient and Family Advisory Council, experienced delays common before this program. While hospitalized for HD initiation at another facility, he risked losing his assisted living placement and two therapy dogs due to extended hospitalization.

"I pleaded to be discharged, but I still didn't have outpatient dialysis arranged," Varnal recalled. "The wait was agonizing. I was at risk of losing my home and my dogs—my lifeline."

Developed in collaboration with CDPH and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, this program demonstrates how targeted policy flexibilities can have an immediate and measurable impact on care for underserved populations. It provides a scalable model that other hospitals can replicate to reduce delays and improve care for uninsured dialysis patients.

**About Los Angeles General Medical Center**

Los Angeles General Medical Center is a 600 bed, Level One Trauma Center operated by the County of Los Angeles Department of Health Services (DHS). A Magnet®-designated hospital in affiliation with the University of Southern California (USC) and the College of Nursing, LA General is a leader in trauma and specialty care, delivering cutting-edge treatment through its world-class Burn Center, Level III Neonatal ICU, and comprehensive pediatric and psychiatric emergency services. The hospital combines clinical excellence, innovation, and education to set the standard for advanced healthcare across Southern California.