ASN progress in achieving its five strategic goals since last year’s Kidney Week

**Goal 1**

**Lead the kidney community by focusing on education, communications, policy, and collaboration**

**Announcing the Hidden Epidemic of Kidney Diseases Worldwide**

More than 850 million people worldwide have some form of kidney disease—roughly double the number of people who live with diabetes and 20 times more than the prevalence of cancer. The global burden of kidney diseases was determined through a concerted effort by the American Society of Nephrology (ASN), the European Renal Association–European Dialysis and Transplant Association (ERA-EDTA), and the International Society of Nephrology (ISN).

In addition to using high-impact data to communicate the kidney disease pandemic and raise awareness of kidney diseases, ASN/ERA-EDTA/ISN are collaborating to compare the realities across the global nephrology workforce and to prioritize ethical issues confronting nephrologists.

**Transitioning to a New JASN EIC, Launching an Open Access Journal**

JASN remains the most cited nephrology journal that publishes original research about the kidney and kidney diseases. Under the leadership of new Editor-in-Chief Josephine P. Briggs, MD, JASN introduced a new cover with a prominently displayed short Table of Contents, began publishing Letters to the Editor, and improved the time from submission to publication. JASN introduced monthly Patient Voice editorials to provide the patient perspective on research articles, and now includes Visual Abstracts for all research articles. JASN impact factor rose by more than 20% over the past year.

The online versions of both journals were redesigned to provide easier navigation, greater search capability, and safer pay-per-view functionality.

In 2020, ASN will introduce Kidney360, an open access, online-only general kidney journal. Kidney360 will facilitate timely and broad dissemination of global kidney science, encourage data sharing, and incorporate innovative publishing tools to maximize discourse within the kidney field.

**Expanding Social Media, Communities**

ASN’s social media presence is strong and growing. ASN’s main twitter page @ASNKidney experienced a 28% growth in followers since 2017; @ASNAdvocacy, @KidneyNews, @JASN_News, and @CJASN experienced even higher levels of growth. The society launched a twitter page for @Kidney_X in April 2018. @AskASN Twitter chats remain popular, attracting a growing number of nephrology fellows and trainees. ASN’s social media users are mostly from the United States, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Canada, Spain, and India.

ASN Communities allow kidney health professionals to network, collaborate, and discuss issues facing the specialty on an online platform. ASN members from more than 130 countries composed approximately 17,000 posts across 19 Communities and Exchanges, led by 47 community leaders.

**Broadcasting the Board Review Course & Update (BCRU)**

BCRU now has an expanded leadership team of two Education Directors and an Education Deputy Director. The course’s leaders have increased the number of female speakers from 4 in 2017 to 10 in 2018 and added a lecture, “How to Study for the Boards: How to Approach a Board Question.”

Each week for the eight weeks between the conclusion of BCRU and the fall American Board of Internal Medicine Nephrology Board examination, ASN will email course participants a selection of nephrology “pearls of wisdom”—five things to know about important board topics. Each email will include seven “pearls” plus one nephrology diagnostic algorithm to help clarify thinking and focus studying.

**Goal 2**

**Transform kidney research through discovery and innovation to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases**

**Establishing KidneyX to Spur Innovation**

Established in April 2018 with a Memorandum of Understanding between ASN and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, KidneyX seeks to improve the lives of the 850 million people worldwide currently affected by kidney diseases by accelerating the development of drugs, devices, biologics, and other therapies across the spectrum of kidney care including prevention, diagnostics, and treatment.

KidneyX will engage a community of patients, researchers, innovators, and investors to develop breakthrough therapies through a series of prize competitions. The first KidneyX prize competition, aimed at improving kidney replacement therapies for patients, launched on October 25, 2018. Learn more at KidneyX.org.

**Continuing to Build the Kidney Health Initiative (KHI)**

A public–private partnership among ASN, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the nephrology community, KHI now includes more than 90 organizations and companies, making it the largest collaborative in the kidney arena. KHI workgroups and the KHI Patient and Family Partnership Council advance the collaborative’s mission to enhance patient safety and foster innovation in kidney diseases.

KHI’s signature initiative, “Developing a Roadmap for Innovative Alternatives in Renal Replacement Therapy,” will be submitted to a top nephrology journal for publication in the coming months. KHI published eight additional articles this year, including “Prioritizing Symptoms of ESRD Patients for Developing Therapeutic Interventions” in the Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology. Four new projects were launched, and work continues for six ongoing projects. To learn more, visit www.kidneyhealthinitiative.org.

**Implementing Recommendations from the ASN Innovation and Discovery Task Force**

The ASN Innovation and Discovery Task Force is working on several initiatives to support future innovators in nephrology, to educate clinicians about breakthrough treatments and approaches, and to identify mechanisms and funding sources to generate evidence for and success of cutting-edge clinical research about kidney diseases. Initiatives include support for the development of a clinical trial finder, mandatory clinical trial training during nephrology fellowships, and seed funding and advisement to small companies to help ideas progress to the proof-of-concept stage.

**Supporting the Future through the ASN Foundation for Kidney Research**

At ASN Kidney Week 2018, the ASN Foundation for Kidney Research will announce the results of the Seeding the Future Campaign. The campaign raised more than $22,600,000 in gifts and pledges from ASN, Keryx Biopharmaceuticals, Inc., Amgen, and individual donors. These funds were used to endow five career development grants in 2018, including one Joseph V. Bonventre Grant, two Carl W. Gottschalk Grants, one John P. Merrill Grant in Transplantation, and one Norman J. Siegel Research Scholar Grant.

**Goal 3**

**Encourage every kidney health professional in the world to contribute to, and benefit from, ASN**

**Expanding the ASN-Amos Medical Faculty Development Program**

To address the shortage of scholars from historically disadvantaged backgrounds with academic and research appointments in nephrology, ASN partners with the Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundation to administrate the ASN–Amos Medical Faculty Development Program (ASN-AMFDP) award. The program offers four-year postdoctoral research awards. The first recipient is continuing his work on gene discovery in African Americans with familial focal segmental glomerulosclerosis.

ASN and RWJ announced a second ASN-AMFDP award finalist to be honored in 2019: Rasheeda Hall, MD, whose research aims to develop an evidence-based approach to deprescribe potentially inappropriate medications for older dialysis patients.

**Initiating the LGBTQ and Ally Member Reception at Kidney Week; #1AmASN Promotion**

ASN holds its first ever lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) and ally member reception at Kidney Week 2018. The event is meant to be an evening of networking and gathering to discuss ways of serving LGBTQ participants in ASN Kidney Week and supporting LGBTQ members of the kidney community.

In another effort to highlight the diversity of ASN’s membership, #1AmASN buttons will be available at the ASN Services booth for pickup and display. Attendees are encouraged to put on a button, take a picture, and share on twitter @ASNKidney with the #1AmASN hashtag.

**Providing Travel Support for the NIDDK NMRI and Exhibiting at SNMA and LMSA**

ASN provides travel support to individuals conducting kidney-related research to ensure their attendance at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Network of Minority Health Research
In addition, the ASN Foundation funded 44 leading researchers who are working to cure kidney diseases, including 25 new projects and 19 projects continuing work begun in 2016 and 2017. The Foundation provides leading indicators on the nephrology job market. The ASN Nephrology GME Database. Future efforts include monitoring trends in nephrology, and expanding Kidney TREKS (Tutored Research & Education for Kidney Scholars) to include PhD students. ASN also recently assessed program content at ASN Kidney Week to confirm that the meeting now offers the same amount of basic science as in the past.

GOAL 4

Foster career development for current and future kidney health professionals

Identifying Trends in Nephrology Training and Practice

The ASN Data Analytics program identifies trends in nephrology training and practice in order to provide the kidney community with data key to informed decision-making.

In collaboration with investigators at George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, ASN conducted the 5th annual Nephrology Fellow Survey, which provides leading indicators on the nephrology job market and perceptions of training and clinical practice. The Early Practice Survey (of nephrologists out of training between 2 and 10 years) found key distinctions between physicians in group practices and those based in academic centers.

Continuing research collaborations overseen by the program include the joint ASN/ERA-EDTA/ASN Global Nephrology Workforce Survey to characterize nephrology practice across the world and quantify how nephrologists’ roles differ within and between regions. Other ongoing efforts include monitoring trends in the current nephrology training landscape by analyzing data collected in the ASN Nephrology GME Database. Future initiatives include the launch of the ASN Data Resource Center, a dedicated online repository for reports and other resources, and development of the biennial ASN State of Nephrology Practice Survey.

Launching the ASN Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Award Program

The ASN Foundation for Kidney Research launched the ASN Pre-Doctoral Fellowship program, which will award five two-year fellowships to nephrology PhD students annually.

In addition, the ASN Foundation funded 44 leading researchers who are working to cure kidney diseases, including 25 new projects and 19 projects continuing work begun in 2016 and 2017. The Foundation provided more than $3 million in funding for members at all stages of their careers.

The Foundation funds the Career Development Grants Program, the Ben J. Lippis Research Fellowship Program, the William and Sandra Bennett Clinical Scholars Program, the American Society of Nephrology–Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Program, and the new ASN Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Program.

Partnering with the American Physiological Society to Establish the APS/ASN Summer Conference Travel Support Program

In 2019, ASN will jointly present the American Physiological Society (APS) Renal Section’s Summer Conference. In addition to co-presenting the conference, ASN will provide travel support for up to 30 participants to attend the conference via a new ASN Fundamental Science Travel Support Program. This program underscores ASN’s continued commitment to expand opportunities for ASN members interested in basic, or fundamental, science.

Other ASN initiatives to support basic science include holding two summits for PhD students since 2013, initiating a new grants program for PhD students, funding research fellowship and career development grants in basic science, and expanding Kidney TREKS (Tutored Research and Education for Kidney Scholars) to include PhD students. ASN also recently assessed program content at ASN Kidney Week to confirm that the meeting now offers the same amount of basic science as in the past.

Planning to Start ASN Midcareer Awards in 2019

In April 2018, the ASN Council unanimously approved a proposal from the Career Advancement Committee to add midcareer awards to the ASN awards portfolio. These awards will honor healthcare providers between 10 and 20 years from completion of their professional training who have demonstrated impact in nephrology in the areas of clinical service, research, education, mentorship, and leadership.

ASN partnered with the American Heart Association Council on the Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease to dedicate the Young Investigator Award to Donald W. Seldin, MD, FASN. Dr. Seldin, who died earlier this year, helped establish nephrology as a medical specialty and create ASN, serving as the society’s second president in 1967–1968.

GOAL 5

Assess the value of nephrology to health and science professionals, healthcare systems, and other stakeholders to ensure high-quality care for patients

Expanding Nephrologists Transforming Dialysis Safety (NTDS) to Include Human Factors Engineering

ASN’s partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention engages nephrologists to take the lead in bringing about the cultural changes needed to transform infection prevention in dialysis facilities. NTDS expanded to include human factors engineering to identify barriers and facility adherence to infection prevention practices. Six facility observations will take place in 2019.

NTDS also contributed an infection prevention section to the ASN Virtual Mentor Curriculum, compiled an Ebola Gap Analysis, launched a vescicular access initiative, published an infection prevention series of manuscripts in CJASN, and produced two webinars in the “Targeting Zero Infections” series: “Infectious Disease Reporting: State Requirements and Resources” and “Environmental Decontamination.”

In its 3rd year, NTDS will offer two additional webinars, publish a Hepatitis Screening Algorithm, and present recommendations on blood culture standardization. It will further produce a NephSAP special edition on infection prevention and an infection prevention curriculum for fellows.

Asserting the Value of Nephrology with Community and Congressional Stakeholders

ASN convened the 4th Kidney Community Advocacy Day (KCAD) and 6th annual Kidney Health Advocacy Day (KHAD) in Washington, DC, to urge funding and legislation to improve care for kidney patients and innovation in kidney medicine. In partnership with the American Association of Kidney Patients, 69 patient and physician advocates met during KHAD with congressional delegations about the urgent need to accelerate innovations in kidney care.

At KCAD, 75 advocates from 15 organizations representing the spectrum of patient and professional groups in the kidney and transplant community called on their congressional delegations to increase funding for kidney research, support increased innovation in kidney medicine, including KidneyX, and pass the Living Donor Protection Act.

ASN proposed a proposal from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that would reduce physician payment under Evaluation and Management codes. Coupled with a proposal to reduce the documentation burden—a concept ASN has long supported and favors overall—the proposed reimbursement changes could have wide-ranging effects. ASN is partnering with other medical specialties to urge CMS to work in collaboration to develop more nuanced, less harmful policies.

Holding a Disaster Relief Summit

ASN convened a Disaster Relief Summit in June 2018 to address the current state of disaster preparedness and relief in the United States and Caribbean. The summit brought together experts in disaster preparedness and response from across the country, as well as a representative from the International Society of Nephrology Disaster Relief Task Force and a nephrologist from the Caribbean.

Participants identified challenges and gaps to achieving high-quality care in pre- and post-disaster situations and recognized ASN’s role in setting policies concerning disaster preparedness and in helping to facilitate availability of healthcare professionals during and after disasters.

Bringing Together a Group of Division Chiefs to Discuss the Need to Reassert the Value of Nephrology

To assert the value of nephrology to a diverse array of stakeholders, the ASN Council is reimagining what the specialty will stand for in the future and articulating the aspects that are core to achieving that vision. The topic will be an area of focus at a Summit of Division Chiefs ASN will convene in late 2018, and numerous ASN committees are sharing their perspectives. Looking ahead, ASN plans to publish a manuscript defining the scope of nephrology practice and articulating a vision for nephrology in the future in a peer-reviewed journal in early 2019.