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**Mid-Atlantic Renal  
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# Press Release

## **Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative Recruits New Clinical Consultants**

**Midlothian, VA, July 27, 2009** The Mid-Atlantic Renal Coalition (MARC) announces that Dr. Jay Wish from University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland and Dr. Michael Lilly from the University of Maryland have joined the Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative (FFBI) as clinical consultants. MARC was awarded the contract by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to direct the national FFBI in February 2009 with the goal of achieving a 66% ArterioVenous fistula (AVF) rate in prevalent hemodialysis patients. As of May 2009, 52.6% of prevalent hemodialysis patients received treatment with an AVF which has long been recognized as the “gold standard” for establishing access to a patient’s circulatory system to provide life-sustaining dialysis.

MARC President, Louis Diamond, MD, announced that adding a nephrology consultant brings added value to the initiative as much of the future work requires nephrology leadership. “Dr. Wish is well respected in the renal community and has led a number of important CMS projects including the ESRD Clinical Performance Measures.” His leadership positions with ESRD Networks 9/10 and the Forum of ESRD Networks provides a desired link to the ESRD Networks who are seen as prime drivers of the FFBI.

Dr. Michael Lilly is a vascular surgeon who served as the Society for Vascular Surgery’s initial representative to the FFBI. “Dr. Lilly brings the necessary surgical expertise to the project and provides a fresh perspective to the challenges and barriers faced in achieving the 66% goals,” states Dr. Diamond. “He currently serves on the Society’s Health Policy Committee which recognizes the FFBI as a priority issue.”

MARC remains committed to re-invigorating the FFBI through leadership that facilitates effective communication and stimulates dissemination of data, protocols, practice materials, and educational resources to patients, nephrologists, surgeons and primary care physicians.

Interested parties should visit the FFBI website at [www.fistulafirst.org](http://www.fistulafirst.org).

**For Immediate Release**