NEWS RELEASE

Ascend Collaborates on Research to Estimate the Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 Among the U.S. Dialysis Population

REDWOOD CITY, CA, June 17, 2020 - Ascend, the nation's leading dialysis testing laboratory collaborates with the Stanford University School of Medicine to study the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in a nationwide sample of dialysis patients. The study will begin in July 2020, and last up to one year. It is the most extensive study of this type and will include approximately 30,000 patients. Ascend will use the FDA, EUA approved SARS-CoV-2 Total Antibody assay from Siemens Healthineers, utilizing their high throughput Atellica® immunoassay instrument.

"Ascend has been dedicated to the dialysis community," said Paul Beyer, CEO, Ascend. *"Through this research collaboration, we hope to provide valuable information that will be critical to patient care and long-term virus management."*

The study focuses on dialysis patients who need to interact with the healthcare system to receive life-sustaining therapy, even during a worldwide pandemic. Patients in this vulnerable population cannot quarantine themselves, so it is crucial to understand their exposure status and highlight any differences between age groups and other regional factors. The research aims to estimate the exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the U.S. dialysis population and understand the rates of protective immunity over time.

Shuchi Anand, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Stanford School of Medicine, is the protocol director for the study and will lead the research. By bringing epidemiologists, statisticians, and infectious-disease experts together to plan this wide-scale study, the anticipated results will provide vital tools to prepare patients on dialysis and service providers as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

In the short-term follow-up, the study will also help estimate the potential need for healthcare capacity and vaccine requirements to support this high-risk patient population in future waves of COVID-19.