

The FFS (Fight Fibrin Sheath) Campaign launches to improve patient lives by tackling dialysis catheters' most common dysfunction

Campaign group vocalises profound clinical concern and years of frustration about fibrin sheath build-up in venous catheters with the goal of finding effective solutions that improve outcomes for dialysis patients

22nd September 2026 -- An international coalition of vascular access surgeons, nephrologists, researchers and industry partners today launched [the Fight Fibrin Sheath \(FFS\) campaign](#), a clinician-led action group working collaboratively to advance research, education and innovation relating to fibrin sheath formation, and to improve vascular access outcomes for dialysis patients worldwide.

Fibrin sheath is a near-universal complication of dialysis catheters; a fibrous, protein-based build-up that begins to form around a central venous catheter (CVC) within hours of insertion in almost every patient. Left unaddressed, it restricts blood flow, triggers repeated clinical intervention and shortens the working life of the catheters that hundreds of thousands of dialysis patients rely on to stay alive. First documented more than 40 years ago, it has long been managed as a routine, unavoidable side effect of catheter use rather than treated as a problem that clinical practice and device technology should be solving.

Nick Inston, Consultant Vascular Access Surgeon at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, and spokesperson for the Fight Fibrin Sheath campaign, explains how all the available data points to a glaring opportunity for the renal and dialysis community to address:

“Fibrin sheath is a massive issue that no-one is talking about, hence our desire to start a campaign to tackle it once and for all. Fibrin sheath develops in 80–100% of CVCs within the first week of insertion. This directly affects the 50–75% of dialysis patients who begin treatment on a catheter, the majority of whom still need one for their primary vascular access six or more months later.

But fibrin sheath isn't a new phenomenon. Recent research among clinicians worldwide found that fibrin sheath is the dominant failure mode in catheter care, and our collective confidence in preventing it is lower than for any other complication we face¹.

The harsh truth is that CVCs have been vilified despite their continued importance. It's hugely frustrating and patients should be angry. We say it's time for the community, including industry to start looking at catheters again. The current situation is unacceptable and why this campaign exists.”

The FFS campaign brings clinicians, researchers, patient advocates and device manufacturers together around a shared, evidence-led agenda: to fund and conduct further research into fibrin sheath prevention, to raise awareness of its impact among patients and policymakers, and to press

¹ See Notes to Editors for research data

device manufacturers to step up innovation efforts. Clinicians can [sign the FFS pledge](#) to lend their weight to the strength of feeling among surgical, nursing and other practitioners who encounter this issue every day.

The campaign is supported by “FFS Champions” drawn from across clinical practice, patient advocacy and industry. These include the Vascular Access Society, European Kidney Patients Federation, Dialysis Catheter Collaborative and BioInteractions Ltd, with an open invitation to any and all similar bodies and complementary organisations to join the fight, take action and help spread the word.

Full details of the FFS campaign and its goals are available at www.fightfibrinsheath.com, where interested parties can learn more about fibrin sheath, share experiences, follow campaign updates and get involved.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Decision Making and Choice in Dialysis Catheters, a global survey of 111 clinicians across 37 countries led by the Dialysis Catheter Collaborative found that:

- **52%** of clinicians surveyed name fibrin sheath and thrombosis the primary complication limiting catheter lifespan, ahead of infection (29%) and malposition (15%).
- Just **38%** said they were confident in current technology's ability to prevent fibrin sheath — the lowest score of any complication tested.

Full details of the survey results are available at www.fightfibrinsheath.com.

About Fight Fibrin Sheath

The Fight Fibrin Sheath (FFS) campaign is an international, clinician-led action group working to advance research, education, innovation and awareness around fibrin sheath – a near-universal but underrecognised complication of dialysis catheters – with the goal of improving vascular access outcomes for patients worldwide. Founding partners include the Vascular Access Society and BioInteractions Ltd. More at fightfibrinsheath.com.

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