

**KICD AM 1240**  
**Spencer Iowa**  
**Grassley Visits Warner Dialysis Center**

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A U-S Senator gets a first-hand look at the Warner Dialysis Center in Spencer. Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley visited the Spencer Hospital Wednesday morning and got to spend some time with the patients.

He called it "a learning experience." Grassley had never spent an hour observing the daily operation in a dialysis unit. His brother-in-law is a dialysis patient in Waverly, so he was very interested in the services offered.

Grassley says the delivery of quality health care is very important in rural America. He applauded the Warner Unit and said it appears to be providing a high quality service-- close to home.

Director Carolyn Sheridan gave him information on the Kidney Care Quality and Improvement act of 2005. The bill is H-R 1298 in the U-S House.

She told Senator Grassley Spencer Hospital is very concerned about the low reimbursement rates it gets through Medicare.

He says he realizes community hospitals have to remain fiscally viable and not lose money. Grassley says Sheridan provided him with some valuable information that he'll take back to Washington, D-C.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, it's Grassley's responsibility to make sure there is adequate reimbursements for rural health care facilities.

He hopes dialysis patients will take advantage of the medicare prescription drug benefit when it becomes available in January of 2006.

The Warner Dialysis Center treats around 15 people per day. The patients are dialyzed three times a week. The high number of patients coming to Spencer led to the opening of another Warner Dialysis unit in Spirit Lake. That facility treats patients Monday, Wednesday and Fridays.

The topic of stem cell research came up as Grassley answered questions from the media. He says he isn't ready to endorse the bill passed by the Republican controlled U-S House last week.

He said "I am a 71-year old embryo-- and I think it can be a very slippery slope if you lose your respect for life." Grassley says the public needs to understand there is federal money for the existing line of stem cell research. He needs to know that is inadequate before voting for an expansion of the embryonic research.

President Bush has threatened to veto the House bill that expands federal funding for embryonic stem cell research.

Grassley says he wants to see significant breakthroughs that prove embryonic research is producing better results than umbilical cord or adult stem cell research.

He would likely vote against the legislation out of his respect for life. The Senate will debate the measure this summer or fall.