



## Fast Five with Dr. Mike Akom

President, Maine Nephrology Associates

*Welcome to Fast Five—our monthly feature that spotlights an individual connected with the MaineHealth ACO. This month we had a chance to catch up with Dr. Mike Akom for five quick questions.*

### **How do you think specialists should be involved in the work of the ACO?**

In the ACO world, we're all supposed to be pulling in the same direction—and to a large degree specialists have not really become involved in how they can affect the triple aim. Adding specialists into committees, such as finance, will allow the ACO to see a different way in which care can be delivered more efficiently and cost-effectively. Another reason that I'm happy about being part of the finance committee is that I have an independent practice. This adds a different aspect to financial governorship—which can be very useful. Since we're all in it together, having a mix of specialists and PCPs is important because we're all seeing slightly different perspectives of the same issue or goal. The more perspective we have, the better our end-product will be.

### **What is the major focus for the Physician Engagement and Alignment Committee (PEAC)?**

PEAC is critical to the success of the ACO. Its immediate focus needs to be finding an infrastructure where the message and plan from the ACO can be delivered to providers. This can ensure ideas, goals and programs emanating from the provider community can be delivered efficiently to the ACO. I see PEAC as a conduit of communication between those two groups to create alignment. As we move to a more streamlined, cost-effective delivery of care, one of the biggest challenges we face is how that larger goal will be implemented successfully to individual providers.

**What is your top work priority this month?** At Maine Nephrology Associates, we're trying to improve our delivery of care. One way of doing that is to improve access to our providers. So we are developing an Acute Care Clinic—where patients can be discharged sooner from the hospital, or see us sooner if they become acutely ill at home, rather than unnecessarily having to go to the Emergency Department.

**What do you do to stay fit and healthy?** I believe everything should be done in moderation—so at night when I'm having my bowl of ice cream, I put a scoop back in the tub (just kidding). I have two young boys—ages 9 and 12. They are very energetic (to say the least) and they keep me very busy—I'm their big play toy and I love that! I'm also trying to get back into running. Once upon a time I ran a lot, so I am trying to work out my mileage right now. And just focus on eating healthy.

**What's On Your Nightstand/Playlist Right Now?** Right now I'm reading "Dead Weight" by Erik Larson. It's about the last crossing of the Lusitania—a historic account of the sinking of that ship by German U boats. As far as what's on my playlist—I'm currently listening to a band called "Cage the Elephant." We've gone to a couple of their concerts—they're very energetic and fun.

*Mike Akom, MD is the President of Maine Nephrology Associates and an attending nephrology physician at Maine Medical Center. He is a member of the Physician Engagement and Alignment Committee (PEAC) and the ACO Finance Committee. Prior to his work with Maine Nephrology, Dr. Akom was the Chief Resident in Internal Medicine and the University of Maryland Medical Center.*