

## THE ROLE OF THE HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER WITHIN THE RENAL SETTING

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**AIM** - To acknowledge the role of the Health Care Support Worker within the Renal setting and look at how the NVQ has influenced that role

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES -**

- ◆ To demonstrate how the role of the HCSW can enhance client care
- ◆ To demonstrate the position a HCSW holds within the Multi Disciplinary team
- ◆ To show how it works in practice

**ABSTRACT** - The role of the HCSW was introduced to our unit over 10 years ago. As the role was new, it was predominantly technical support.

Recruitment and retention of staff in Renal has been an ongoing problem for a long time and we felt that we could utilise the role of the HCSW to benefit both clients and the Renal Unit.

The introduction of NVQ Level 3 in Dialysis Support during 1997 offered invaluable training for all dialysis HCSW.

This rewarded the HCSW by enabling them to complete specialised units not normally available to untrained staff which would inevitably benefit trained staff.

From this, the HCSW have taken their role further:

- ◆ HCSW are able to cannulate
- ◆ Grade C HCSW initiating dialysis using a central catheter
- ◆ Grade C HCSW planning their own teams off duty
- ◆ Grade C HCSW planning and booking clients holidays
- ◆ Grade C HCSW responsible for all water testing and maintenance
- ◆ All HCSW enjoying a specialised interest relevant to their team

There is also one Grade C HCSW working full time as part of the Practice Development team. She has the NVQ in Dialysis Support level 3, Assessor & Verification of the NVQ certificates and a teaching qualification. She is responsible for supporting and assessing all NVQ candidates, orientation and machine training of new staff, training sessions and competency based learning.

We now have Grade C HCSW working in each team complimenting the role of the trained staff. This enables flexibility and availability of training and creates essential time off the unit for trained staff.

*The need is not to replace trained nurses but to support and develop our unit.*