

AN INTEGRATED PATHWAY FOR MANAGING THE CARE OF END STAGE RENAL FAILURE PATIENTS ONTO RENAL REPLACEMENT THERAPY.

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PROBLEM: Moving increasing numbers of patients smoothly from a pre dialysis status to establishment on Renal Replacement Therapy requires an orderly and carefully managed pathway of care.

PURPOSE: This project has sought to describe optimal care by combining and integrating checklists, standards, evidence and patient data with case management activities and outcomes data. The prospect of a National Service Framework for nephrology being implemented in England and Wales in the future, makes it imperative that individual units have mechanisms in place to manage care and to provide a robust reporting and audit framework.

DESIGN: A group of consultant nephrologists undertook a review of the current evidence base with regard to best practice in pre dialysis care and with input from members of a nursing team drew up a care pathway with a set of documentation for use by all members of the multi-disciplinary team. The process begins with the early identification of patients with declining renal function being referred to a 'Low Clearance Clinic'. The proposed pathway with parallel but interacting lanes to Peritoneal Dialysis, Haemodialysis and Transplantation uses a model of individualised managed care by a nurse practitioner and integrates all the elements required to ensure timely initiation of dialysis or transplantation.

CONCLUSION: The care pathway has been planned to ensure that patient participation and informed consent is paramount and copies of the most important information are provided within the care pathway package for patients to form their own record.

RELEVANCE: The care pathway and tools have been written to enable the broadest possible number of nephrology teams to make use of the documentation.

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