

## FAMILY MATTERS: THE EFFECT ON CHILDREN OF HAVING A PARENT WITH CHRONIC RENAL FAILURE – A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.

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**PROBLEM:** Within the pre-dialysis area information giving is essential to help renal patients and their families make appropriate decision about treatment options. Some patients asked what they should tell their children or talked about behavioral changes they, or schools, had seen in their children. They wanted to know how to prepare their children for the changes that take place in family life when a parent has chronic renal failure.

**PURPOSE:** To identify the documented effects on children of having a parent with chronic renal failure. This information was then used to help design a study that aims to identify the information that children who have a parent with chronic renal failure want to know.

**DESIGN:** A critical review of the published literature that addressed the question 'what are the effects on children of having a parent with chronic renal failure?' was undertaken.

**FINDINGS:** The review showed a very limited amount of research had been undertaken which considers this important topic. Only 7 articles were identified – none from studies in the United Kingdom. Many negative aspects of having a parent with chronic renal failure were identified including depression, behavioral problems and under achievement. However, some positive aspects could be found – some children displayed enhanced self-esteem. The review clearly identified that these children had specific information needs that were not being met.

**CONCLUSION:** Chronic renal failure in a parent has many effects on family life and the children within the family – some positive and some negative. The information needs of these children are apparently not being met.

**RELEVANCE:** This literature review has highlighted an area of practice where changes could be made to improve the care that we offer to renal patients and their families. It has provided a springboard to inform a practice based research project which will consider the information needs of these children.