

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PATIENTS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

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Increasingly renal teams are being presented with patients who have complex psychological and social needs.

This was highlighted by a patient with learning difficulties, and a complex social background, presenting to the pre dialysis education team.

This paper demonstrates how a multi-disciplinary approach made this case a pilot for the development and implementation of a new strategy for patients presenting challenges to service delivery.

By working with outside agencies with knowledge of the patient a pathway was prepared.

A Complex Care Strategy evolved which included the following :-

- A risk assessment tool
- The enabling of any member of staff to identify any patient at any time for Complex care planning
- The facility to call a Complex Care multi-disciplinary planning meeting
- Methods to identify patients with complex needs on the renal IT system and in all areas of the unit.

Use of this strategy enabled the patient to undertake an untroubled route both in the pre dialysis phase and later onto haemodialysis. Potentially explosive or confrontational situations having been anticipated and planned for.

Since the strategy was put into place staff from different disciplines within the unit have felt empowered to identify patients for Complex Care planning to the benefit of all. They have gained reassurance from knowing there is a system in place to support both 'at risk' patients and the staff who look after them.