

EVALUATING AN A-V CANNULATION TECHNIQUE IN A PATIENT TRAINING AREA

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PROBLEM: Evaluating a needling technique that can be used with patients but that will support sometimes challenging vascular access, empower patients to take responsibility for their own vascular access, facilitate self care and to support the longevity of vascular access.

PURPOSE: The constant site or buttonhole needling technique was introduced into the self care training unit . The purpose of which was to develop clinical practice and support the development of a self care for patients, offering this choice to a wider group of patients.

DESIGN: A strategy for cannulation using this technique was established, and appropriate documentation devised for local use. All patients using the facility from Jan 08 to December 08 were included. The technique was discussed with patients initially and both written and visual information was available to them.

FINDINGS: During Jan 08 to Dec08 this technique has introduced to 24 patients, of which 21 patients liked the technique, felt comfortable and preferred to continue. 3 patients discontinued for various reasons like did not like the idea of dull needle, it was taking more time for cannulation, been on home haemo in the past for a long time and preferred sharp needles.

CONCLUSION: Clinical practice was established using this technique and refined over the course of the study. The technique proved successful for patients with limited vascular access, (though other patients also adopted this method). The technique supported self care for this group of patients and for those who had psychological difficulties with cannulation (needle phobia). As a direct result of this techniques a number of patients were successful in their transition to home haemodialysis.

RELEVANCE: One way a home haemodialysis programme can be expanded, offering choice to a greater number of patients, is through adaptation of this cannulation technique. It is of particular relevance to patients with limited vascular access and can help patients overcome their needling fears. It is hoped that overtime the aesthetic appearance of the AV fistula will be improved and ultimately contribute to the longevity of the patients vascular access.