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Pre-end-stage kidney disease multidisciplinary health education programs improve comprehension about information of living donor kidney transplants in Taiwan: a single medical center experience

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Objectives: For patients with advanced chronic kidney disease (CKD), choice of renal replacement therapies is an issue. Compared to hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, kidney transplant is a better option for not only improvement of quality of life but reduced long-term mortality. However, the waiting list for kidney transplants is much larger than the number of donated organs in Taiwan, and it takes a long time for a successful match. Therefore, we implemented a pre-end-stage kidney disease (Pre-ESKD) multidisciplinary health education program to improve comprehension about information of living donor kidney transplant (LDKT).

Methods: We provide pre-ESKD health education program for patients whose estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) is less than 45 ml/min/1.73 m². As the program launched, the nephrologist and CKD nurse educator provided relevant information about kidney transplant. If a patient decides to choose LDKT, when the patients' eGFR less than 15 ml/min/1.73 m², the organ transplant team actively holds a family meeting with the patient and their relatives to discuss in depth the process of the transplant operation and the precautions after the operation.

Results: From 2017 to 2022, a total of 22.56% (8014 patients/35241 patients) CKD patients were referred to the organ transplant team, where they received and comprehend information about LDKT. Among them, 25 successfully received kidney transplants, including 21 LDKT and 4 cadaveric kidney transplants. Nearly 30% (6 patients/21 patients) did not receive any dialysis prior to kidney transplant. The average time course of recipients from the initiation of Pre-ESKD education program to LDKT was 5.0 years.

Conclusions: The intervention of the Pre-ESKD health education program improved comprehension skills of kidney transplants. The program helped to increase the number of LDKT and to reduce the possibility of dialysis before kidney transplant.

Figure_Percentage of dialysis prior to kidney transplantation in Taiwan, 2017-2022