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Catastrophic health expenditure for households with Kidney Disability in urban and rural area in Korea

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Objectives: In Korea, dialysis or kidney transplant recipients can be registered as legally Kidney Disability. This study identified catastrophic health expenditure (CHE) of people with Kidney Disability by classifying them into urban and rural areas.

Methods: A comparative study of a cross-sectional analysis of panel data for 11 years from 2008 to 2018 by Korea Health Panel. Household financial information: household income quintile, total household income, subsistence expenditure, and annual household out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditure were adjusted for number of household members, and household OOP expenditure were all controlled for possible confounding variables. CHE was defined when annual household OOP expenditure exceeded 40% of annual payment capacity. All costs are presented in USD per KRW at 2008 exchange rate.

Results: Subjects were 313 people with Kidney Disability. Among them, 264 (84.4%) were disabled people receiving dialysis, and 49 (15.7%) were disabled people who had received kidney transplantation. 70.9% were urban and 29.1% were rural residents. Looking at household income quintile, highest grade, 5th grade, was 9.0% in cities and 3.3% in rural areas. Total household income between urban and rural areas was approximately \$14,500 and \$14,100, respectively ($P > .05$), but there was a difference in subsistence expenditure at approximately \$11,600 and \$10,600 ($P < .04$). In addition, annual household OOP expenditure was about \$3600 and \$3700 in rural areas, but there was no statistical difference. CHE was 79.3% in cities and 67.0% in rural areas ($P < .02$).

Conclusions: There was no difference between urban and rural household OOP expenditure in Kidney Disability, but prevalence of CHE was higher in urban than in rural area. This can be presumed to be because income of Kidney Disability does not differ between urban and rural area, but subsistence expenditure is lower in rural area.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of Kidney Disability in urban and rural area