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Impact and Outreach of Kidney Health Videos on YouTube: A Content Analysis

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Objectives : Taiwan is facing a significant challenge with the highest prevalence of end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) globally, necessitating extensive dialysis treatment. This is reflected in the escalating treatment costs, as reported by Taiwan's National Health Insurance (2007-2019). Amid this health crisis, there has been a noticeable shift towards online platforms for health information. YouTube, a widely used platform in Taiwan, has emerged as a key source of kidney health education. This study aims to evaluate the influence and content of YouTube videos on kidney health.

Methods : A systematic search for Traditional Chinese videos on YouTube using the keyword "kidney," until November 30, 2023, identified 142 videos with over 100,000 views in Taiwan. The selection criteria excluded videos that were advertisements, not focused on kidney health, exclusively about ESKD, not in Traditional Chinese, or duplicates. This filtering yielded 93 videos for analysis. A regression analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the video views and their duration.

Results : The most-viewed kidney health videos typically covered more than two health topics, predominantly diet (65 videos), disease symptoms (42 videos), and lifestyle recommendations (19 videos). The videos mostly featured medical experts, including nephrologists (43 videos), Chinese medicine practitioners (17 videos), and specialists from other fields (21 videos). The average YouTube channel had 632,500 subscribers, with videos receiving an average of 596,853.5 views and lasting 852.79 seconds (approximately 14.21 minutes). There was a significant positive correlation between the video duration and the number of views ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions : YouTube is a vital platform for disseminating kidney health information in Taiwan, with videos predominantly featuring healthcare professionals to cover symptoms, diet, and lifestyle adaptations related to kidney health. It has the potential to serve as a tool for enhancing public engagement in kidney care and self-management strategies. Future research should explore additional factors influencing video viewership.

figure1_video views and video duration.jpg

