

INTRODUCTION

Caring for Your Patients – the Whole Person Perspective

This section of material is placed here to help you assist your patients with more than their renal replacement needs.

Every time a patient walks through the door of your facility they bring a primary need for Renal Replacement Therapy (RRT) wrapped within the body and soul of a whole human being. Although your main concern should be focused on providing the best dialysis possible, remember that the kidneys are an organ within a holistic organic system. Also remember that most every patient has a shadow with them – it is the shadow of a loved one behind the waiting room doors, at home or somewhere “out there.” The loved one usually waits and worries and hopes for the best. Together your patient and your patient’s family forms one complete system to be cared for and managed.

Here you will find useful material on how to deal with needs which fall outside the medical technology of dialysis. Of particular importance is the Strengths Perspective – use it first, use it often, especially when patients present challenges that seem to “stump” your care team. And always remember that termination of services to a patient is the **option of last resort**, to be used only when all else has failed.

Dialysis patients are like all people in the rest of our society, only they have kidney disease. Know that Pareto’s Law applies to dialysis facilities; you will spend eighty percent of your time dealing with twenty percent of your patient census. Don’t be surprised by this. Accept that you will find some of your patients to be a joy to work with and some of them not so joyful. Adjust to your environment using these simple tips:

The power of referral, no one can know or do everything
You’re not the Lone Ranger, you’re part of a team
Ask lots of questions, listen to the answers
Admit when you need help and seek it
Don’t make assumptions
And remember Linda’s Golden Rule:

There is not one patient in your facility who wants to be there.