

Time and Difficulty with Tasks and Illness Characteristics Among Caregivers of Individuals Receiving Daily Home Hemodialysis

Hannah B. Henderson, Janet L. Welch

Indiana University School of Nursing, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) affected approximately 594,374 people in 2010. Patients receiving dialysis often need help with activities of daily living and tasks outside dialysis treatments. The burden of providing assistance and support for such patients can be overwhelming for caregivers, regardless of the modality. This study examined several factors that may be associated with time and difficulty of tasks experienced by caregivers of individuals receiving daily home hemodialysis (HHD). Examining relationships between caregiver age, caregiver income, length of time on dialysis, and patient co-morbidities with perceived time and difficulty with tasks may assist with focusing interventions within specific demographic groups. The purpose of this study is to examine these relationships. This study used existing data from a mixed-methods study. The original study examined needs, concerns, strategies, and advice of daily home hemodialysis caregivers. Participants included 16 caregivers, recruited from a large daily home hemodialysis program in a Mid-western city. There was no relationship between length of time the patient was receiving HHD and time or difficulty with tasks. There was no relationship between age of the caregiver and time or difficulty with tasks. There was no relationship between income and time or difficulty with tasks. There was no relationship between the number of patient comorbidities and time or difficulty with tasks. One important limitation of this study, and possibly the reason that no significant results were discovered, is the small sample size. This study was designed to look at possible factors that may increase perceived caregiver burden. Although there were no relationships found between selected demographic or clinical variables and perceived time expenditure and difficulty with tasks, future research should examine other variables such as relationship of caregiver to patient, caregiver health and comorbidities, and level of involvement of home dialysis staff.

Mentor: Janet L. Welch, School of Nursing, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.