

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Fostering a future of home dialysis: transforming kidney care in Europe

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In recent years, the emphasis on well-being, and not only on the therapeutic outcomes of individuals undergoing dialysis, has led to a significant shift in the way nephrologists approach treatment options for their patients [1]. This “person-centered” approach is crucial when designing care strategies and becomes even more relevant when helping patients to choose their dialysis treatment option. The aim is to provide personalized care in the most appropriate setting: the right care, for the right person and in the right place. This requires a close collaboration between healthcare team and patients, including shared decision-making to facilitate a deep understanding of the patient’s needs, objectives, priorities and preferences, and to ensure the highest quality care while minimizing the overall burden of treatment for the patient [2].

In this evolving context of kidney replacement therapy, home-based dialysis emerges as a beacon of hope, offering an individualized and person-centered therapy option associated with greater patient autonomy and satisfaction compared with in-center hemodialysis [3, 4]. However, despite a growing interest of nephrologists in promoting home dialysis, there is still a wide variation in access to these techniques worldwide, including in Europe [5]. For this reason, a change of perspective is needed to drive the development of home dialysis. The following review articles will provide an update on crucial issues around the promotion of home dialysis, with the purpose of stimulating the incidence and prevalence of this technique.

Brown *et al.* will discuss the different factors impeding the growth of home dialysis in Europe. In this sense, it is not enough to identify barriers, the perspective of healthcare teams must be transformed, while educating patients to take decisions on their treatment options. A holistic approach requires a shift in mind-

set, from a perspective centered on biological indicators to one centered on the needs and preferences of the patients with kidney disease. This will enable the promotion of person-centered kidney therapy, with the benefits that arise from home-based treatment.

The second review will focus on the integrated care model. This approach involves considering care pathways rather than focusing on types of replacement therapies in isolation [6]. In this way, a single treatment option may not be sufficient throughout a patient’s lifetime, especially for young people, but a variety of kidney replacement techniques may be required throughout a patient’s life course. This allows each option to be tailored to the clinical and psychosocial needs of the time [7]. Poinen *et al.* will outline this approach as the cornerstone for facilitating the initiation or transition to home dialysis. An integrated care model emphasizes person-centered care, informed decision-making and comprehensive support. The global transition will be made more accessible through adequate training for patients, families and healthcare teams.

The integrated home dialysis model will be discussed by Desbiens *et al.* This approach aims to combine the advantages of the two modalities of home dialysis. Patients are encouraged to start dialysis with peritoneal dialysis (PD), and subsequently switch to home hemodialysis once PD is no longer possible. This ensures maintenance of the advantages of home dialysis despite changing between techniques. In their review, Desbiens *et al.* will address the conceptual advantages and disadvantages of integrated home dialysis, current challenges and solutions. This model plays a key role in facilitating the transition to a home care setting, which affects both the growth and maintenance of home dialysis programs.

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Furthermore, when delving into the transformation of kidney care in Europe, it is essential to recognize the aging trend observed in our population over the past decades. This demographic shift has led to a growing number of elderly individuals requiring kidney replacement therapy [8]. In this context, the assisted dialysis model emerges as a potential strategy, particularly in making PD more accessible to both incident and prevalent elderly patients, as well as younger frail individuals, overcoming some barriers related to PD self-care and providing essential support throughout their treatment journey [9]. In their comprehensive review, Reyskens *et al.* will provide an in-depth overview of the epidemiology of assisted PD in European countries. They explore some categories and clinical outcomes associated with assisted PD, shedding light on its potential implementation in clinical practice as a viable strategy to boost and sustain home-based dialysis techniques in Europe.

Following the aforementioned considerations, it becomes imperative to underscore that the focus should not only be on increasing the number of patients eligible for home dialysis but also on guaranteeing the accurate and personalized prescription of this therapy. Hence, the following review will be focused on personalizing PD prescriptions, taking into account the recent paradigm change reflected in the International Peritoneal Dialysis Society guidelines concerning dialysis adequacy. This review will underscore that the impact of dialysis on patient outcomes goes far beyond the mere removal of small solutes. This represents a paradigm shift towards a more holistic approach that includes incremental PD, palliative care and even transition between modalities. Shared decision-making is recognized as part of the process to achieve optimal outcomes while reducing treatment burden [2].

Finally, the last review highlights e-health and remote patient monitoring as powerful tools for dialysis patients. Despite the many advantages and potential benefits of these resources, challenges remain to be addressed. These tools pave the way for more patients to benefit from home dialysis through real-time monitoring, early detection of complications and rapid and timely intervention. In this review, Lew *et al.* will address the past, present and future of e-health and remote patient monitoring in home dialysis support. This technological approach improves safety and efficacy of home dialysis, gives patients a greater sense of security and control over their health, and facilitates long-term compliance [10].

In conclusion, a change in healthcare attitudes and objectives, together with the identification of barriers, the adoption of integrated care models, supported dialysis strategies and the incorporation of cutting-edge technology, are leading the way to a future where more patients can benefit from home dialysis. The long-term goal is to change the trajectory of kidney care in Europe, moving towards a more holistic and comprehensive approach. This shift will focus not only on treatment outcomes, but also on the overall well-being of these patients, recognizing the uniqueness of each patient's condition, and striving to improve overall quality of life and patient health outcomes. It is time to embrace the growing use of home dialysis. Let us join forces to make a difference!

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

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