Challenges in Nephrology: A Survey of Physicians Regarding Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice

This survey is anonymous. Thank you for your participation! Your contribution is highly valued, as getting information from physicians working "on the ground" with patients is crucial in this first investigation of medical ethical dilemmas in nephrology in resource limited settings. The data from this survey will also be useful to inform evidence-based policy and practice in medical ethics and may be used for teaching of medical students and for academic publication to disseminate the findings. Since there are important differences between health care levels, some questions may not seem applicable to you, but please answer as best you can based upon your situation. We value your opinions, and are grateful for your participation. We will inform you of the outcomes of the survey after completion by general email.

If you have any questions or comments or which to participate further in this project, please contact us at vluyckx@hotmail.com (Valerie Luyckx) or maglo09@hotmail.com (Gloria Ashuntantang)

By filling in and returning this survey we presume you consent to our inclusion of your anonymous responses in the study.

Part 1. Background
1. What is your gender?
Female
Male Male
2. What is your age?
< 25 years
25 to 35 years
36 to 45 years
46 to 55 years
older than 55 years
 4. In which country did you complete your post-graduate medical training? 5. Since graduating as a doctor how many years have you been practicing medicine? < 5 years 5-10 years
11 - 20 years
> 20 years
6. How long have you been working in nephrology?
< 5 years
5-10 years
o to yours
11-20 years
11-20 years

7. What is your current clinical role?	
General practice (yes/no)	
Trainee (please specify)	
Specialist (please specify)	
Other (please specify)	
8. Where do you practice as a doctor seeing patients with kidney disease? (please indicate all that a	pply)
Government institution	
Teaching institution	
Private for profit institution	
Private section within a government facility	
Private non profit institution	
Own private institution	
Other	
0. If you are involved in academic medicine, what is your position?	
9. If you are involved in academic medicine, what is your position? Not in academics	
Junior faculty	
Assistant or Associate Professor	
Senior faculty/ Full Professor	
Serior lacuity/1 dir i folessor	
10. Do you participate in any decisions on where the resources are spent/allocated like in planning a budgeting in your health care department/facility?	and
Yes	
○ No	

1. On average, approxii	mately how many	hours/ week do you wo	ork in:	
3 / 11	< 5 hours	5-10 hours	11-20 hours	> 20 hours
Government institution				
Teaching hospital				
Private practice				
Other				
Other (please specify)				
2. On average approxing	nately how many p	patients with kidney dis	ease do you see in a v	week?
	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Inpatient				
Outpatient				
3. On average approxim	nately now mairy p	oatients per week do yo	ou occ mne roquire uia	ilysis ioi.
	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI)				
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney				
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney	< 5	5-10	11-20	
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD)	< 5	5-10	11-20	
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD)	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how mai	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how man Acute dialysis for AKI Acute dialysis for new	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how man Acute dialysis for AKI Acute dialysis for new ESKD	< 5 Ony patients per week < 5 Ony Ony Ony Ony Ony Ony Ony Ony	5-10 ek do you see who rec	eive dialysis for:	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how man Acute dialysis for AKI Acute dialysis for new ESKD Chronic ESKD	< 5 Ony patients per week < 5 Ony e group (years) are	5-10 ek do you see who rec 5-10 o e most of the kidney pa	eive dialysis for:	> 20 > 20 > 20 one of?
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how man Acute dialysis for AKI Acute dialysis for new ESKD Chronic ESKD	< 5 Ony patients per week < 5 Ony e group (years) are	5-10 ek do you see who rec 5-10 o e most of the kidney pa	11-20 eive dialysis for: 11-20 tients that you take ca	> 20 > 20 > 20 one of?
Acute kidney injury (AKI) End-stage kidney disease (ESKD) 4. On average how man Acute dialysis for AKI Acute dialysis for new ESKD Chronic ESKD	< 5 Ony patients per week < 5 Ony e group (years) are	5-10 ek do you see who rec 5-10 o e most of the kidney pa	11-20 eive dialysis for: 11-20 tients that you take ca	> 20 > 20 > 20 one of?

Part 3: Ethical Dilemmas

Below is a list of situations where medical decision-making can be difficult.

16. In the last two years how often have you been in the following situations in your routine clinical practice caring for patients with kidney disease?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
Unable to obtain basic laboratory testing you needed to appropriately diagnose and manage patients with kidney disease?					0	
Concerned that laboratory testing is unaffordable to your patient?			\bigcirc			
Unable to obtain consistent basic medication you required for control of blood pressure and/or diabetes for patients with kidney disease?						
Concerned that basic medication is unaffordable to your patient?		\bigcirc	\bigcirc			
Felt pressured by a patient's financial constraints which limit your care of your patient?				0	0	
Felt pressured by your institution's financial constraints which limit your care of your patients?						
The preferred course of treatment was not pursued because of a patient's inability to pay?			\bigcirc			
You were in doubt if a diagnosis should be disclosed to the patient?		0	0		\bigcirc	

17. In the last two years dialysis	how often ha	ave you been	in the following	situations reg	arding patien	t access to
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
Limitation of resources required you to make a difficult choice?						
Have been unable to dialyze patients with AKI who require dialysis?						
Have been unable to dialyze patients with ESKD?						
18. In the last 2 years, it ollowing barriers contrib	oute?		•	·		
Patient admits to	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
financial constraints?						
You suspected significant patient financial constraints?		\circ		\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Lack of dialysis machines or supplies?						
Inadequate hospital infrastructure (room, water, staff/electricity)?						
Reluctance from staff?						
Patient died before dialysis could be initiated?		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Family reluctance due to cultural/religious beliefs?						
19. How often do you or	your patient	s use the follo	owing to contain	costs?		
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
Reduce dialysis frequency per week?						
Use temporary catheters longer-term for hemodialysis?		\bigcirc				\bigcirc

•	Always	Often	o in the following Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
You cared for adult patients that were not in a state to make a decision for themselves unconscious/ disabled), and you had to decide for them?						
You were restricting dialysis treatment to a patient to give those esources to someone who could benefit more?				\bigcirc		
You felt that the patients need of treatment was not in agreement with the patient's family needs or velfare?	\bigcirc			0	\bigcirc	
There was significant disagreement among nealth care personnel on continuing treatment of the patient due to lack of esources?						\bigcirc
There was significant disagreement among amily members on continuing treatment of the patient?		0		0		
You felt conflicted between your obligations to the patients in the public hospital and to your patients in private practice?						
You discussed cases which presented ethical dilemmas/ debrief about distressing events with colleagues?				0		
ou worried about patients not able to access care during your non-working hours?		\bigcirc				

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
You were so troubled by limited resources that you regretted your profession?						
Resource limitations made/make you consider leaving your country to practice elsewhere?		\circ		\bigcirc		
21. To what extent do yo	ou agree or d	isagree with th	ne following sta	atements		
	Agree	Somewhat a	agree Disa	gree Str	ongly disagree	Not applicable
In my setting, there is lack of enough resources to provide standard medical care		0			0	
In my setting, there is lack of enough resources to provide medical care for patients who require dialysis					\bigcirc	
Costs for the patient is important for me when I decide to use or not to use an intervention						
I have seen that health care costs drive people into financial crisis						
If I see that the patient is poor, I do not let the patient know about the expensive option						
The financial burden on the health care system is important when I decide to use an intervention or not			(\bigcirc	
I sometimes deny beneficial but costly services to certain patients because resources should go to other patients that need them more		0				

22. How often do the following factors influence whether you offer dialysis to a patient?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
The patient has the possibility of receiving a kidney transplant						
The patient has private health insurance						
The costs of dialysis is paid by the government						
The costs of dialysis is paid by the patient/family out of pocket						
The patient is old > 70y						
The patient is a neonate						
The patient is a child						
The patient is an adolescent						
The patient is poor						
The patient is an important person in society						
The patient is the family bread-winner						
The patient is a mother of small children						
The patient is cognitively impaired						
The patient lives far away						
The patient has a poor chance of survival						
The patient/family pushes strongly for dialysis						
The patient will not be able to work again						

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
The kidney failure is a result of the patient's lifestyle choices (obesity, HIV, drug abuse, herbal remedies)						
23. Does your country h	ave a nationa	al policy rega	rding dialysis?			
	Ye	es	No		U	nsure
My country has a policy governing who can receive dialysis for AKI						
My country has a policy governing who can receive dialysis for ESKD)				\bigcirc
25. Does the situation (-	s) you have o	described ha	ppen often where	you work?		
Happens sometimes						
Happens rarely						
26. Is there any support consultation, ethics com	mittees?). If	yes, please o	describe.	uss ethical dil	emmas? (e.g	ı. ethics
27. Do you nave any lur	ther commer	its you wish	o snare?			
Thank you for your participati	on in this survey	<i>'</i> .				