Barriers and Success Factors for Home Dialysis Treatment and Influence of a Target on Uptake Rates

**Background**

- Government policy around the world favours shifting services from hospital to community, with an emphasis on home-based care and self-care.
- There is considerable potential for a large-scale shift towards home-based self-care for patients on dialysis with end-stage renal failure.
- Uptake of home dialysis in England fell from 31% to 18% between 2002 and 2009.
- In April 2010, the service commissioner for the West Midlands introduced a five-year target to increase take-up of home dialysis to 35%.
- This study investigated the effect of the pay-per-performance target and examined the barriers and facilitators to increasing the uptake of home dialysis, as an exemplar of the challenges involved in shifting from hospital-based to home-based care for a group of patients with complex medical needs.
Findings:
- The study revealed a 5% increase in home dialysis uptake in study hospitals, compared with the rest of England.
- 93 patients and 96 staff were interviewed across four hospitals in the West Midlands.
- Factors that influenced the uptake of home dialysis included:
  - **Facilitators**
    - The Commissioner’s pay-for-performance scheme.
    - Funding for specialist staff and dialysis machines.
    - Support from renal clinical leads, individual champions for home dialysis, and enthusiastic home therapy nursing teams.
    - Ongoing support through phone, home visits, and out-patient appointments.
  - **Barriers**
    - Lack of training for non-specialist staff.
    - Pre-dialysis education was described as an “information overload” by patients, and didn’t focus enough on the effect of home dialysis on their lives.
    - Many patients experienced emotional distress when learning that they would need dialysis, but there was a lack of emotional support in place for patients.

Recommendations for Practice
Four service elements need to be in place to encourage patients to opt for home-based self care: information, guidance and support for patients; high-quality training in the use of dialysis machines; ongoing technical assistance and support for patients once they are on home dialysis; emotional and psychological support to help patients adjust to end-stage renal failure.

Reference