

**Overview of 'Recommendations for minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in UK adult haemodialysis units' produced by the Kidney Quality Improvement Partnership (KQUIP) Patient Safety in Haemodialysis working group.**

The aim of the document is to provide practical advice for healthcare professionals to help minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission within both in-centre and satellite adult haemodialysis units. This applies to both NHS run and private provider units. The recommendations are based on the most up to date evidence, research, expert opinion and government advice relating to the identification and management of the COVID-19 virus.

Since March 2020 we have experienced many changes in the way kidney care has been delivered and received; reduction in access to face to face appointments, an increase in telephone and video consultations and for some, the cessation of transplantation. The introduction of shielding to protect people with kidney disease has created its own challenges, particularly for those who still need to attend for haemodialysis.

People receiving haemodialysis for end stage kidney disease are classified as extremely vulnerable to infection with COVID-19. Information gathered by the UK Renal Registry COVID-19 surveillance report <sup>1</sup>indicates around 10% of adult patients receiving haemodialysis in the UK have had confirmed COVID-19 and 25% of these have died.

Some dialysis units have experienced significant outbreaks within groups of patients who received dialysis at the same time, suggesting that transmission may have occurred within the dialysis unit. To address these and other concerns a multi-professional working group convened to collate information and advice from expert renal healthcare professionals, expert patients, public health medicine and published reports to compile recommendations for safe practice in adult haemodialysis units in relation to managing and preventing transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

A copy of the full document can be accessed <https://renal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Recommendations-for-minimising-risk-of-transmission-of-COVID-19-on-UK-ha...pdf>

Key points from the recommendations include:

- Enhanced infection control measures in the dialysis units, such as:
  - scrupulous cleaning and disinfection of all areas
  - Use of personal protective equipment for both staff and patients
- Defined procedures for screening on arrival, testing of symptomatic patients
- The isolation of COVID-19 positive patients
- Managing a COVID-19 outbreak in a dialysis unit
- De-isolation protocols and self- isolation guidance
- Social distancing measures including
  - during transportation to and from dialysis

- Waiting areas: changes to improve social distancing and flow; Separate doors for arrival and departure where possible
- One-way systems for patients and staff to prevent “hot spots” for close contact
- Keeping records of where and when each patient dialysed to aid contact tracing

Information for patients has also been produced to compliment the recommendations and can be found at <https://www.kidneycareuk.org/news-and-campaigns/coronavirus-advice/>

These recommendations are subject to review and change in accordance with government guidance and evolving research.

#### References

1. UK Renal Registry (2020) COVID-19 surveillance report for renal centres in the UK: All regions and centres. The Renal Association, Bristol, UK

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