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Infection prevention education in Middle-Africa (M-A)! A challenging project

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Vascular access is not only known as the 'Achilles heel' of haemodialysis (HD) but it is also the quiet undercurrent of trends in patient outcomes. At present the prevalent central venous catheter (CVC) use has increased to more than 25% while 80% of patients initiate HD with a CVC. A significant cause of CVC-related morbidity and mortality is infection. CVC and even fistula (AVF) infections are mostly caused by *Staphylococcus Aureus*, commonly found bacteria on the surface of the skin. These infections may occur at the CVC exit site, cuff, tunnel or at the AVF puncture area's. If antibiotic therapy doesn't resolve the infection, the CVC may need to be removed or the AVF is unusable. Therefore most HD centers teach patients care techniques to minimize infection occurrence.

Medical Industry asked us to use our expertise and knowledge in nephrology to help out and overcome the high infection rates and help with the prevention education concerning CVC and AVF infections in HD units of some of their M-A clients.

Firstly five HD units were visited in 3 M-A countries to look in and list up the way of working, the used materials and the hygienic plight of the units. Secondly a complete report was made up and discussed with the partners of the project. As ultimately, emphasis must be placed on infection prevention, rather than treatment, simple, easy to use routine procedures can help to reduce the risk of infections. These include hand washing, keeping the CVC site dry and clean, changing CVC dressings, avoiding CVC trauma, AVF protection, etc. In cooperation a complete presentation with simple "targets" will be prepared and propositions for changes will be made. Targets that can be monitored and influenced from distance preferably. If really necessary a multilingual nurse and physician of our unit can be send out to run the educational sessions with the different partners on site.

Conclusions:

We already understand that prevention, education and the way to explain the "new" way of working are the basic words and needs that we have to prepare and merge in this project. Further conclusions will have to show after the first implementation of the changes proposed to the partners.

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