



AMERICAN NEPHROLOGY NURSES' ASSOCIATION

ANNA'S 43RD NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 29-MAY 2, 2012

WALT DISNEY WORLD DOLPHIN, ORLANDO, FL

A Time For Change

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Identification of CKD patients who need a permanent dialysis access within a large nephrology practice is harder to do than one might think. Utilization of an electronic healthcare record can provide ease of identification while posing increased barriers and limitations to provide effective care. Identifying the patients, education to all the stakeholders involved, early referrals to the vascular surgeon, and having team collaboration takes careful planning, organization, and continued monitoring for effective outcomes. Building the care team within the practice and all the parties in the community is the topic of discussion. The Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) approach and how it can impact the quality of care to the patient and provide improvement of outcomes which can be sustained for long term is the objective of the model. After implementing the care model of an IDT the practice was able to show a 5% reduction of catheters in place for first initiation of Hemodialysis. Continued monitoring is in place to reach a goal of 6% in 6 months. The relevance of the model and barriers overcome are seen in practice throughout the nephrology community and can be lessons learned to take back to respective employers for implementation of change. Providing the best quality of care to the patient is the ultimate goal for change to happen. Developing a vascular access path for each patient is crucial to improving outcomes and long term care of the dialysis patient.

Abstract selected for presentation at ANNA's 43rd National Symposium, Orlando, FL, 2012