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**CSI-Nephro: Communication Skills Initiative in Nephrology – A Pilot Program**

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**BACKGROUND:** There is little multi-disciplinary/cross cultural communications skills training available for nephrology healthcare professionals. Research indicates renal patients want to know about their illness, discuss prognosis and plan for the future. Clinicians may lack the skills and confidence to undertake these often emotional conversations and communication across culture makes it even more challenging.

**AIM:** To address this need a novel joint project with palliative care services was initiated to create a multidisciplinary cross cultural communication program to improve these skills and provide better renal supportive care.

**METHOD:** Multidisciplinary renal staff identified key areas of communication they found challenging. Core themes to emerge were prognosis/ACP, cross cultural communication, strong emotion and discussing serious news. A 3 day intensive experiential course was created utilising simulated patients from different cultures to represent core concerns. The course was for doctors, nurses and social workers and used small and large facilitated groups.

**RESULTS:** To date 30 participants have attended 3 courses and completed pre and post questionnaires that were analysed to determine participant impact, a 4th course is still to run. Preliminary data shows evidence for improvement in confidence and skill base across multiple domains, as well as satisfaction with the course structure and function.

**DISCUSSION:** Multidisciplinary cross cultural renal communication skills training is achievable and results point towards increased clinician confidence and skill base.

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