

P115

P115 -Designing a Wellbeing Month for Renal Patients

Ms Margaret Eyre¹, Ms Vicky Pursey¹, Ms Suzanne Runacres¹

¹York Hospital, York, United Kingdom

Problem

Renal patients, and particularly those on haemodialysis, have notoriously low levels of energy combined with high incidences of fatigue, anxiety and depression. This finding was supported through a wellbeing questionnaire, used by the social work team with local haemodialysis patients. Of the 39% who responded, a large proportion (41%) mentioned difficulty sleeping, followed by rumination (34%), anxiety (32%), social isolation (22%), irritability (17%), depressed mood (17%), thinking negatively (10%) and using alcohol or drugs to cope (5%). The most commonly expressed worries were about their carers or those for whom they cared, and their financial situation; using a simple 1-10 visual analogue scale there was an average 3-point drop in their quality of life score from pre-CKD to their current situation, with younger patients tending to have a more dramatic decrease.

Purpose

The Wellbeing Month was designed to address the prevalence of depression, insomnia and lower-level anxiety in renal patients, concentrating on the importance of taking a holistic rather than a largely biochemical view of medicine in order to help maximise quality of life.

Design

A collaborative approach was taken, whereby key members of the renal team, namely social workers, physiotherapist, psychologist, medic and dietician, designed a programme of wellbeing drop-in sessions in June 2018, in keeping with the wellbeing principles of the Care Act 2014. Planning involved use of the hospital site as a venue, securing suitable rooms in advance and organising a wide variety of activities designed to appeal to our diverse patient population. The programme included adapted tai chi, artwork, benefits drop-in, relaxation techniques, pet handling therapy, Iyengar yoga and laughter yoga, carers' information, mindfulness, shared care and fatigue management. A small budget was provided by our charitable fund to pay external providers (with Public Liability Insurance and appropriate qualifications) to run some sessions. However, many activities were delivered either gratis or through the existing skills of the team. Advertising for the Wellbeing Month, and our various professional roles, was displayed on information boards in the dialysis unit and through our renal newsletter, and information was posted, e-mailed and highlighted on the Trust's renal web page.

Conclusion and Future Plans

Although numbers attending each session were small, those who did participate gave very positive feedback. Taking a holistic approach to enhancing patient wellbeing is a vital factor in improving patients' quality of life. Physical activity is an important component of this, and techniques such as mindfulness and yoga can greatly decrease stress levels when practised regularly.

Attendance might have improved with earlier or more extensive publicity; it may also be challenging logistically for patients to commit themselves to additional activities, and fatigue may have prevented some from taking part. Learning from the modifiable barriers, plans are already in place for the next Wellbeing Month in spring 2019. The team is also exploring ways of taking wellbeing activities into the dialysis unit, as it is frequently those most in need of support who are unable to participate due to the already heavy burden of dialysis attendance.