

Starting dialysis on Time At home on the Right Therapy (START) Newsletter

The Opportunity

Most patients with kidney failure are treated with hemodialysis (HD) or peritoneal dialysis (PD). Dialysis therapies have a significant impact on patients' lifestyle and involve a large time commitment. While the two therapies are comparable with respect to important clinical outcomes, PD has been shown to improve quality of life for patients at a reduced cost to the health care system. The number of patients on PD varies from 14 to 24 percent across Alberta, and many eligible patients are not treated with PD.

Approximately 23 percent of patients with kidney failure also start dialysis earlier than recommended, and the demand for dialysis therapies in Alberta continues to increase year after year. More details about this will be highlighted in future editions.

What is the START Project?

In partnership with the Kidney Health Strategic Clinical Network™ and Alberta Kidney Care, the Northern and Southern Alberta Renal Programs are participating in the “Starting dialysis on Time At home on the Right Therapy” (START) project”. The START project aims to address the increasing demand for dialysis, with the following specific goals:

- maximize the safe and effective use of PD
- ensure patients are starting dialysis at the appropriate time
- improve patient outcomes and experiences; and
- reduce costs to the healthcare system.

Multiple sites across Alberta are participating in the START initiative, which runs from March 2016 to March 2018.

Where are we now?

Project Planning: Since March 2016, the project team has been hard at work developing the project's governance structure, creating the project plan, setting up the environment for the data collection system and developing training materials.

Training: Team members from Edmonton, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Calgary and Lethbridge took part in all-day training sessions, where we learned about the project and received training on DMAR (the data collection system).

Baseline Survey: A survey will be circulated in November that measures the views of medical and operational leads and front line staff regarding the timing of initiation of dialysis and the use of PD in their programs. Information will be used to guide the content of the quality improvement reports.

Future: The data collected from the survey and during the study will allow us to identify and understand the barriers to peritoneal dialysis and develop interventions to address those barriers. An Innovation Collaborative Model will be used to bring the teams together to develop action plans for implementing the appropriate interventions at their respective sites, monitor their progress towards their goals and share the challenges and learnings across the participating teams.

Contact

Please send questions, feedback and ideas for future content of the newsletter to Karen Branicki, START Project Manager:
Email: Karen.Branicki@albertahealthservices.ca
Telephone: (780) 735-1203