

have helped keep this patient alive another day and have kept a family together." A statistical review of our experience over five and one half years showed that combined dialysis and transplantation had saved a total of 63 years of patient life. (12) Another of our nurses expressed it this way: "Generally I did honestly feel that I was doing something, most of the time, for the patients on the chronic dialysis program, bless their courageous hearts!" Then she referred to one of our former patients, a prominent local doctor who went through crisis after crisis, including a transplant rejection, until he finally received a second and successful transplant three years ago. "And when you see someone like Dr. M. as he is today, after all the problems and the fight he had to put up just to stay alive, it certainly makes the whole business well worthwhile, yes? YES!"

SUMMARY

In summary, dialysis nursing is a full-time, challenging, sometimes frustrating and sometimes rewarding field of work. Several nurses replied to questionnaires concerning their thoughts about, and reactions to, chronic hemodialysis. It was gratifying to encounter their real optimism after a long and difficult winter, during which Ottawa was buried in snow, and several of our patients died, most quite unexpectedly.

Many of the nurses seemed to take their concerns home with them, consciously or subconsciously, and often these concerns were reflected in strange or frightening dreams.

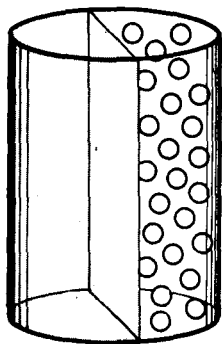
Perhaps the extent of this involvement became obvious as I was writing this paper in the late spring: I began to dream I was dreaming about work! A paper published recently in the American Journal of Nursing described several dreams experienced by hemodialysis staff and patients. In her summary, the author said, "Perhaps the frequent and repeated exposure to a life and death procedure and the close interaction of a relatively small number of persons give cause for a high level of anxiety The after effect of the dreams varies from a great feeling of relief that it was only a dream, to a small gnawing fear that in some way some part of the dream just might come true." (13)

One of our nurses has summed up our attitudes nicely in the closing paragraph of her questionnaire:

"I enjoy working in hemodialysis. The atmosphere is pleasant and relaxed, the hours are great, and the personnel are congenial and interesting. The work has challenge. It certainly gives me a feeling of accomplishment knowing I have been of help to these people in gaining an extra chance of living a fairly normal and productive life. When I see (some of our patients, such as the above mentioned doctor) walking around so healthy and happy to be alive, I am filled with a great sense of accomplishment and fulfillment and satisfaction in my work, and I thank God for the opportunity and privilege of working with other nurses and doctors to accomplish this end."

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DIALYSIS

DIALYSIS TRAINING INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

The University of Utah, Division of Artificial Organs, Institute for Biomedical Engineering (Director, W. J. Kolff, M.D., PhD.) announces a one year training program for "Dialysis Training Instructors".

The objective is to prepare paramedical personnel to actively participate in the teaching of patients for home hemodialysis. It is sponsored by the Division of Allied Health Manpower, D.H.E.W. No tuition will be charged. There is no stipend or per diem.

Minimum requirements are; graduation from high school, with courses in chemistry, physics, and biology. Additional education, or experience in hospital or laboratory work will be considered strong assets. A prime consideration will be evidence of maturity and stability.

Upon completion of the course, personnel should have an adequate background knowledge of normal and abnormal renal physiology, fluid and electrolyte balance, dialysis theory and application, and problems peculiar to maintenance dialysis patients. They will be thoroughly familiar with various types of dialysis equipment, its operation and maintenance.

It is anticipated that these individuals will be capable of acting as instructors for patients in home dialysis training programs, working closely with the supervisory nurses and physicians.

Upon satisfactory completion of the training course, appropriate certification will be issued. First enrollment date: September 1, 1971.

For information, contact:
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