

IMPACT OF A SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP INTERVENTION IN ESRD PATIENTS

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No study has examined the impact of social support interventions in ESRD patients. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a randomized controlled trial of a social support group intervention designed for ESRD patients would lead to improvements in perception of social support, depressive affect, and quality of life (QOL). All patients with ESRD at the K Street and Southeast Dialysis Units were eligible to participate. Informed consent was obtained. Patients were asked to complete questionnaires before and after the social support group intervention including the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) to measure depressive affect, the Multidimensional Scale for Perceived Social Support (MSP) to measure perception of social support, the Illness Effects Questionnaire (IEQ) to measure perception of burden of illness, and the satisfaction with life scale (SWLS). Baseline demographic data was obtained. The social support group interventions consisted of 5 weekly sessions. A total of 35 patients were randomized to the intervention and control groups. The patients in both groups were well matched for all variables at baseline. 19 patients were randomized to the intervention and 16 patients were randomized to the control group. In the intervention group, there was a trend towards improvement in perception of QOL and decreased perception of burden of illness. However, these did not reach statistical significance when compared to the results of the control group. There was also a trend towards a decrease in depressive affect in the intervention group compared to the control group. There was no significant change over time in the MSP in either group. A social support group intervention for dialysis patients is possible to implement. Additional patients will need to participate in trials to determine whether these trends reach statistical significance.