

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIVE TO ENSURE WATER SAFETY FOR HEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss methods of ensuring a safe water supply for the hemodialysis patient population which meets and/or exceeds AAMI standards, to demonstrate collaboration between disciplines and departments to develop and implement the best practice strategies, and to share results and valuable lessons in the dialysis community.

AAMI, 2004 standards require weekly bacterial assays until an acceptable pattern is established in all newly installed water treatment systems used in hemodialysis. This institution's new water treatment system yielded initial results above acceptable limits. An interdisciplinary group convened immediately to analyze the situation and to develop strategies to correct the problem and ensure continued patient safety as well as compliance with federal requirements.

Actions included performing a weekly dialysate culture, establishing an algorithm to provide continued patient monitoring, and total disinfection of the entire water treatment plant using standard and revised methods. Specific culturing techniques were reviewed which resulted in a joint sampling endeavor.

This vigorous process demonstrates support for following AAMI standards as well as customization for each specific water treatment installation.