



Government of **Western Australia**
South Metropolitan Health Service



Improving Renal Transplant Access in Regional Western Australia

Project Report

**Project Sponsored by
National Indigenous Kidney Transplant Taskforce**

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Improving Renal Transplant Access in Regional Western Australia - Project Report

Background

Regional patients with ESKD in the Goldfields and Pilbara regions of Western Australia (WA) are disadvantaged for renal transplant wait listing. These regions combined have >120 patients receiving dialysis for ESKD.

Fiona Stanley Hospital (FSH) provides outreach nephrology service to the Pilbara and the Gold fields regions of WA. Nephrologists provide dialysis supervision and outpatient services. However, these services remain very metro centric. The current service delivery model for renal transplantation involves the visiting nephrologist identifying potential transplant recipients. These patients then come down to Perth for assessment usually several times (including education, medical & surgical assessment, radiology procedures and cardiology procedures). This can lead to considerable delay in the assessment and subsequent waitlisting, although we have made efforts to streamline the patients' visit to maximise efficiency of testing. These patients also experience significant social disruptions because of multiple travels to Perth.

FSH transplant co-ordinators do not have quarantined time to dedicate to the regional/aboriginal patients whose needs are unique and different to the metro patients. (e.g. organising travel, organising accommodation and dialysis in the metropolitan area). Lack of dedicated manpower to coordinate the appointments significant delays in the transplant assessment.

Using NIKTT funding we developed a visiting multi-disciplinary team (MDT) involving transplant surgeons, physicians, nurse, pharmacist(s), aboriginal liaison officer and social worker to visit the Pilbara and Goldfields regions to provide open access transplant education and assessment. We also employed a Transplant Clinical Nurse specialist was appointed 2 days/ week for six months (July 2020 to Jan 2021) to facilitate and coordinate the transplant work up for these regional patients

Project Aims:

- Improve access to renal transplantation for Aboriginal patients by providing education and assessment within the regions.
- Reduce the time to transplant listing and Increase the proportion of Aboriginal patients listed for transplantation.



Outcomes:

2020- 2021

From July 2020 to September 2021, our MDT conducted visits to the Pilbara and Goldfields, conducting 8 full day clinics, 4 patient and family education workshops and 2 education workshops for health care professionals. During the visits,

28/37 patients referred attended the clinics.

2/28 were unsuitable for transplant and 26 proceeded with transplant evaluation.

13/28 were waitlisted and by December 2021,

12 received a deceased donor transplant; average time from dialysis start to waitlisting was 38 (range 10 – 69) months; time from first NIKTT clinic visit to wait-listing was 7.2 (3-15) months; time from wait-listing to transplant was 3 months (2 days to 12 months) months.

In 2021, 12/46 FSH recipients (26%) were aboriginal compared with 4/26 (15%) in 2019 and 7/46 (15%) in 2020. (Fig 1)

Patient survival was 100%, but graft loss occurred in 3 patients (2 infection, 1 rejection from non-adherence).

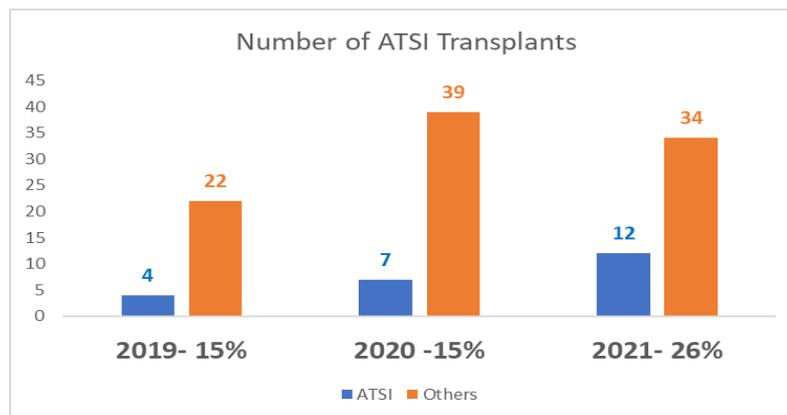


Fig 1- % of FSH renal transplant recipients who are aboriginal Australians

2022

We conducted one visit to Port Hedland during August 2022 to do multi-disciplinary clinic assessment for transplant wait-listing.

There are still approximately 10 patients in the Pilbara and Kimberley region who are on transplant assessment pathway

Conclusions: Outreach MDT clinics and dedicated transplant coordinator position reduced the time taken to waitlisting and increased the proportion of aboriginal patients receiving kidney transplantation.



Lessons Learnt

1. Having a dedicated Transplant coordinator for regional areas is effective
2. Visiting regional teams conducting yarning- transplant education in a non-hospital setting, with family members attending is effective
3. Patients who have received a successful transplant and visiting the dialysis units to encourage and motivate the patients is effective
4. Initial assessments done by the visiting multi-disciplinary team and completing the final assessment in Perth, in one co-ordinated visit is helpful for the patients and lessens the time taken to work up

Overall, a dedicated transplant coordinator for regions and regular visits by multidisciplinary team working in conjunction with the regional teams expedites the transplant assessment process and reduces the time to wait-listing

Current Challenges

Each region has its own unique challenges. Staff retention is an issue especially in the Pilbara. Since late 2021 Regional CKD nurse position in the Pilbara has been vacant.

Without NIKTT sponsorship, we currently do not have a dedicated transplant coordinator or a regular visiting MDT to the regions.

This has resulted in a delay to complete e the work up. 1/10 patients have been listed and others are still pending work up.

Recommendations

1. A fully funded permanent transplant co-ordinator role, based at FSH who works in closely with regional teams and visits regional centres regularly
2. Regularly funded MDT visits to the region (Patients have given positive feedback)
 - a. To conduct patient discussions/education (formal and in formal)
 - b. To conduct clinic reviews
3. Regional staff vacancies to be filled
4. Work closely with local aboriginal corporations and aboriginal health services to provide culturally appropriate services



Regional Visits Summary

Pilbara

Visit 1

Date: July 29th & July 30th 2020

Visit Location: Port Hedland

Visiting Team Members: Dr. Suda Swaminathan (Transplant physician) Dr Ashley Irish (Transplant Physician), Dr Kim Goddard (Transplant Surgeon), My Megan Stinnette (Transplant Nurse), Ms Sharon Loh (Pharmacist), Ms Melissa Coton (Social worker) & Ms Karen Waigana (Aboriginal Liaison worker)

Pilbara Team: Ms Kerri Parker (Pilbara Regional CKD Nurse); Mr Tuando Teodulo (CNM, Hedland Health Campus Dialysis unit, Lisa Taylor – ALO Pilbara regional CKD team

Others: Hedland Health campus Pharmacy, Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Health service, Pilbara Health Professionals Network

Activities:

- Patient and Family workshop x 2 (Patient & Carer Group Information sessions - Kidney Transplant Why? Life after Kidney Transplant)
- Dialysis Staff education by visiting MDT - Group Discussion: How to optimise CKD care and identify Potential Transplant candidates early
- Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Health service – Staff engagement and education by visiting Allied health staff
- Dinner Education Meeting in conjunction with Pilbara Health Professionals Network

Topics:

Renal Transplant Outcomes for Aboriginal patients in WA

Renal Transplant suitability In Aboriginal Western Australians;

Post-transplant follow-up & Post-Transplant Medications

- MDT patient Reviews: 19 patients were booked out of which 13 patients attended and were reviewed in the MDT clinics conducted over 2 days



Visit 2

Date: November 24th and 25th 2020

Visit Location: Karratha Health Campus and Roebourne Aboriginal Medical Service

Team Members: Dr. Suda Swaminathan (Transplant physician), Ms Sharon Loh (Pharmacist), Ms Karen Waigana (Aboriginal Liaison worker)

Activities:

- Dinner Education Meeting in conjunction with Pilbara Health Professionals Network

Topics:

Renal Transplant Outcomes for Aboriginal patients in WA

Renal Transplant suitability In Aboriginal Western Australians;

Basics of Pharmacy in Renal Disease.

- Roebourne Aboriginal Health service – Staff engagement and education by visiting team

Topics:

CKD in Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders

Basics of Pharmacy in Renal Disease.

- Patient Reviews:

Visit to community supported haemodialysis unit and reviewed self-dialysing patients & Patient reviews in Roebourne AMS.

Visit 3

Date: 16th December 2020

Visit Location: Port Hedland

Visiting Team Members: Ms Gemma Johnston (Social worker) & Ms Karen Waigana (Aboriginal Liaison worker); This visit was tagged on to the usual =clinics run by the visiting nephrologists (Drs Suda Swaminathan & Ashley Irish)

Pilbara Team: Ms Kerri Parker (Pilbara Regional CKD Nurse); Mr Tuando Teodulo (CNM, Hedland Health Campus Dialysis unit, Lisa Taylor – ALO Pilbara regional CKD team)



Activities:

Clinic reviews, with focus on social work and ALO support for those on the transplant wait-list and those nearing completion of work-up.

Visit 4

Date: 16th - 17th March 2021

Visit Location: Port Hedland

Visiting Team Members: Ms Kristen Watson (pharmacist), Dr Jagdish Jamboti – Transplant Physician; Dr Mayank Bhandari- Transplant Surgeon) This visit was tagged on to the usual clinics run by the visiting nephrologists (Drs Suda Swaminathan & Ashley Irish)

Pilbara Team: Ms Kerri Parker (Pilbara Regional CKD Nurse); Lisa Taylor – ALO Pilbara regional CKD team

Activities:

Clinic reviews, with focus medication review, ALO support for those on the transplant wait-list and those nearing completion of work-up.

Visit 5

Date: 15-16 June 2021

Visit Location: Port Hedland

Visiting Team Members: Ms Sharon Ho (pharmacist) and MS Megan Stinnette (Renal transplant Nurse This visit was tagged on to the usual clinics run by the visiting nephrologist (Ashley Irish)

Pilbara Team: Lisa Taylor – ALO Pilbara regional CKD team was present.

Activities:

The aim was to educate patients post-transplant on medications, do medication reconciliation. Patients worked up for transplantation received education.

Visit 6

Date: 16th August 2022

Visit Location: Port Hedland

Visiting Team Members: Mr Daniel Bennett Transplant Nurse, Sr Abu Abraham- Renal transplant physician and Dr Suresh Navadgi _ Renal Transplant Surgeon This



visit was tagged on to the usual clinics run by the visiting nephrologists (Drs Suda Swaminathan & Ashley Irish)

Pilbara Team: Lisa Taylor – ALO Pilbara regional CKD team

Activities:

Clinic reviews, with focus on social work and ALO support for those on the transplant wait-list and those nearing completion of work-up.

The Goldfields-Kalgoorlie

Visit 1

Date: 17th& 18th September 2020

Visit Location: Kalgoorlie

Team Members: Dr. Suda Swaminathan (Transplant physician) Dr Ashley Irish (Transplant Physician), Dr Suresh Navadgi (Transplant Surgeon), Ms Megan Stinnette (Transplant Nurse), Ms Sharon Loh (Pharmacist), Ms Melissa Coton (Social worker) & Ms Karen Waigana (Aboriginal Liaison worker)

Kalgoorlie Regional CKD Team: Dr Steve Wright Visiting Nephrologist; Dr Abu Abraham visiting Nephrologist and Brigette Colwell Regional CKD nurse

Activities:

- Patient and Family workshop x 2 (Patient & Carer Group Information sessions - Kidney Transplant Why? Life after Kidney Transplant)
- Dialysis Staff education by visiting MDT - Group Discussion: How to optimise CKD care and identify Potential Transplant candidates early
- MDT patient Reviews
- The aim was to educate patients post-transplant on medications, do medication reconciliation. Patients worked up for transplantation received education.

Visit 2

Date: 9 and 10 September 2022

Visit Location: Kalgoorlie

Team Members: Dr. Suda Swaminathan (Transplant physician) Dr Ashley Irish (Transplant Physician), Dr Kim Goddard (Transplant Surgeon), Ms Megan Stinnette (Transplant Nurse),



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Kalgoorlie Regional CKD Team: Dr Steve Wright Visiting Nephrologist; Dr Abu Abraham visiting Nephrologist and Brigette Colwell Regional CKD nurse

Activities:

- MDT patient Reviews
- Staff education