

QUICK BITS FOR DIALYSIS SOCIAL WORKERS

MENTAL HEALTH SERIES

Depression #1

Supporting Patients In-Center Until They Get Outside Help

Psychosocial and biologic changes that accompany dialysis contribute to the high rates of depression in the ESRD patient population. ESRD patients that have a diagnosis of depression suffer with poor quality of life and increased mortality. Chronic pain in hemodialysis patients is associated with depression and insomnia and may predispose patients to consider withdrawal of dialysis. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and medication together are currently viewed as providing the best outcomes. This resource is designed to assist over-burdened social workers with ideas on how they can help patients.

Resources and techniques to try with your patients:

- **Finding the Words-** identifies emotions and avoids the “depression” label
 - (English) <https://www.qirn5/ongoing-projects/behavioral-health#finding-the-words-activity-english>
 - (Spanish) <https://www.qualityinsights.org/qirn5/ongoing-projects/behavioral-health/#national-institute-of-mental-health-men-and-depression-spanish>
- **Normalize it-** many people, not just dialysis patients, have depression. It is generally very treatable. There are many ways to keep treatment “on the down-low.” Are there other patients or staff who have had to manage depression who would be willing to speak to it?
- **Create a bulletin board-** have patients contribute tips
- **Meditation-** several apps and videos can be found with a quick Google search
- **Exercise, sleep, diet-** several apps and videos can be found with a quick Google search
- **Connect** with people, avoid drugs/alcohol
- **NHS Self-Help Guide** (self-paced and can be printed off): <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/depression-self-help-guide>
- **Mental Health First Aid-** <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2018/07/5-self-help-strategies-for-living-with-depression/>

FOR MORE RESOURCES VISIT

www.qualityinsights.org/qirn5/about/elerts
www.midwestkidneynetwork.org

Social workers are the mental health experts of dialysis centers and can lead other IDT members to best support patients to gain as much comfort from depression as they will accept.



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