**Renal dietary information: Are haemodialysis patients receiving what they need?**

**Introduction:** Patients on haemodialysis usually need to make some change to their diet and fluid intake and will receive individualised guidance from renal dietitians to support them. The extent of diet and fluid modification can vary between patients with some needing to make complex changes.

**Purpose:** All patients on haemodialysis under our renal service receive dietary advice and ongoing dietetic input based on monthly blood results, weight and dietary intake. The patient’s experience of dietary information provided by the dietitians has not been previously evaluated. By undertaking a survey, we aimed to gather patient’s feedback to help inform and improve the service provided.

**Design:** A questionnaire comprising of four questions was devised by the dietitians: 1. If patients felt information given by the dietitian was useful 2. If patients felt they understood the information 3. If patients would like further information and if so, the information they wanted and how they prefer to receive this 4. Additional comments were invited on the service and suggestions for improvement. The survey was conducted by a dietetic assistant and questionnaires distributed to patients at six haemodialysis units. Patients were given the option to self-complete the questionnaire and return on the unit / by post or to complete with the help of the dietetic assistant. A total of 244 (84%) questionnaires were returned and results collated by the dietetic assistant and dietitian.

**Findings:** The following responses were obtained:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | No answer |
| 1. Information given by the dietitian was useful | 33% | 60% | 3% | 1% | 3% |
| 2. Understood the information from the dietitian | 34% | 58% | 2% | 2% | 4% |
|  | Yes | No | No answer |  |  |
| 3. Would like further Information from the dietitian | 30% | 68% | 2% |  |  |

52 patients answered ‘Yes’ for question 3 and specified one or more types of dietary information they would like: Diabetes & weight reducing (15), list of foods they can/can’t eat (10), potassium & phosphate (8), fluid (5), information on blood results, medication (5), poor appetite (4), meal plans & recipes (4), ongoing dietetic input (4), other nutrition advice (4). Patients specified one or more ways on how they would like to receive information: Face to face (25), face to face & leaflets (19), face to face & telephone (4), website, DVD (5), email & telephone (3). The additional comments patients made related to: Satisfaction with the service (190), helpful dietary information (33), convenience of review on dialysis (30), request for information earlier and / or delivered a different way (10) and review at patient’s request (3).

**Conclusion:** The feedback obtained was largely positive with the majority of patients satisfied with the service and dietary information provided.To further improve the quality of service, the dietitians are working on additional diet related resources and different formats to help respond to the needs of patients.