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Perspectives

Take proactive measures for the pandemic COVID-19 infection in the dialysis facilities

Jia-Jung Lee ^{a,b,c}, Chun-Yu Lin ^{b,d,e}, Yi-Wen Chiu ^{a,b,c},
Shang-Jyh Hwang ^{a,b,c,*}

^a Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

^b Faculty of Medicine, College of Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

^c Faculty of Renal Care, College of Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

^d Infection Control Center, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

^e Division of Infection Disease, Department of Internal Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

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The COVID-19 outbreak started from Wuhan, Hubei province, China since Dec 2019 became a great threaten to the modern medical system worldwide. Quarantine and containment are the basic principles to prevent rapidly spreading of the novel infection. However, patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) need regular dialysis to maintain life. The combination of frequent medical visit, long hours of staying, short distance between the medical staffs and a group of patients together become a condition of prone clustering in hemodialysis units. The specified water supply, machines, equipment, capacity, and personnel are further challenges to rearrangement of any regular dialysis therapies.

Taiwan has the highest incidence rate, 493 per million population, and the highest prevalence, 3392 per million populations, of treated ESRD in the world.¹ In the dialysis population of Taiwan, 91.2% of cases complied hemodialysis, 8.8% of cases complied peritoneal dialysis, 45.3% of

cases had diabetic mellitus, and the 5 year survival rate was 58.5%.² In 2020, Taiwan has more than 90,000 regular dialysis patients, 690 dialysis facilities (including hospital-based dialysis units), and the national health insurance covers all of the 23 million residents in a relative small island located in eastern Asia. For enhancing the adherence to the infection prevention and infection control policies, the Taiwan Society of Nephrology (TSN) drafted the "Guidance of COVID-19 infection prevention in dialysis facilities" to help preparation of each dialysis facility to different epidemic stages.³

At this critical time, the world needs to take action to the great challenge of pandemic COVID-19 infection. In the recent informative article entitle of "Mitigating Risk of COVID-19 in Dialysis Facilities" by Klinger and Silberzweig from the American Society of Nephrology,⁴ the authors summarized the scientific data about the disease presentation and the estimated reproductive number of the COVID-19, raised the healthcare professional's alertness to the pandemic challenge, and provided the mitigation strategies for dialysis facilities. Here, we would like to share our actions and add few measures which could be useful from the contingency team of TSN.

* Corresponding author. Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, Kaohsiung Medical University, No.100, Tzyou 1st Road, Kaohsiung, 807, Taiwan.

E-mail address: sjhwang@kmu.edu.tw (S.-J. Hwang).

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