What Factors Really Matter? Health-related Quality of Life for Patients on Kidney Transplant Waiting List

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Abstract

Introduction: Waiting times for kidney transplant are long in Singapore. Health-related quality of life (HRQoL) of patients might be affected as a result of the stress of the long wait and the uncertainty of being called to undergo a surgical operation. This study aimed to measure the HRQoL of patients on the kidney transplant waiting list and to identify factors which could impact on the HRQoL scores in this group of patients.

Materials and Methods: This was a cross-sectional study of kidney transplant waiting list patients managed at a tertiary renal unit using the SF-36. A SF-36 normative calculator was used to generate HRQoL scores for the Singapore general population matched with the study cohort’s age, gender and ethnicity. Results: There were 265 respondents with a response rate was 81%. Our study shows that HRQoL scores for the kidney transplant waiting list patients were lower than the population norms across all subscales and were clinically significant for General Health, Role Physical, Bodily Pain, Social Functioning and Mental Component Summary scores. Factors such as being Chinese, married, employed and undergoing haemodialysis predicted better HRQoL scores after adjusting for possible confounders. Age, gender, educational level, household income, history of kidney transplant, duration on the transplant waiting list and years on dialysis did not significantly influence SF-36 across all subscales scores. Conclusion: Kidney transplant waiting list patients had worse HRQoL compared to the general population. Factors such as ethnicity, marital status, employment status, and type of dialysis treatment significantly influenced patients’ perception of their HRQoL.

Key words: Dialysis, Kidney failure patients, SF-36


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