



Renal Society of Australasia

2019 RSA Annual Conference Funding – Recipients Report

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I chose to attend this year’s conference to support my two colleagues who were presenting and to network with other health professionals from across the Tasman.

One of the posters that caught my attention was about pain during cannulation in haemodialysis. Results of the literature showed that the application of ice on the Hegu point significantly reduced pain of cannulation in haemodialysis. Since returning from the conference, I have mentioned this to both my colleagues and patients and like me, they were intrigued. As a result of these discussions, several of our patients are willing to trial this form of pain management. You never know, this could be a project that we present at next year’s RSA conference!

I was also fascinated with the first keynote speaker, Nigel Latta’s, talk on communication. This has made me reflect on how I communicate with staff, patients & their carers. It made me aware of how my own feelings could actually impact on how I communicate. We always have to think first before acting, which sometimes is not easy to do, especially if we’re overwhelmed with emotions. This skill is very applicable in our everyday life (not just our working life).

The other presentation that also caught my attention was the use of Dialysis Technicians, who are now called Renal Clinical Physiologists, in New Zealand (and apparently in Australia as well). This is very interesting as their role is very similar to what a Registered Nurse would do in a Haemodialysis setting. Not really sure what the payrate would be as this was not discussed. In addition, how would this apply in Australia in regards to professional registration (AHPRA). I’m sure there is definitely a place for their role in the dialysis setting, and it would assist the nurses (especially with shortage of specialist nurses).

The presentation on the availability of “Community Dialysis Houses” was very interesting. It’s amazing how a country could do this with just the support of a Kidney Society. This is one reason why New Zealand has the biggest proportion of home dialysis. I just wish that Australia would also take-on this initiative, so more patients could go home (if they’re medically able to), especially those that don’t have suitable accommodation to perform dialysis at home. This would ease the burden in our public health system, which is already up to its maximum capacity. It was fascinating to hear how the patients in the community houses support each other, especially those who are new.