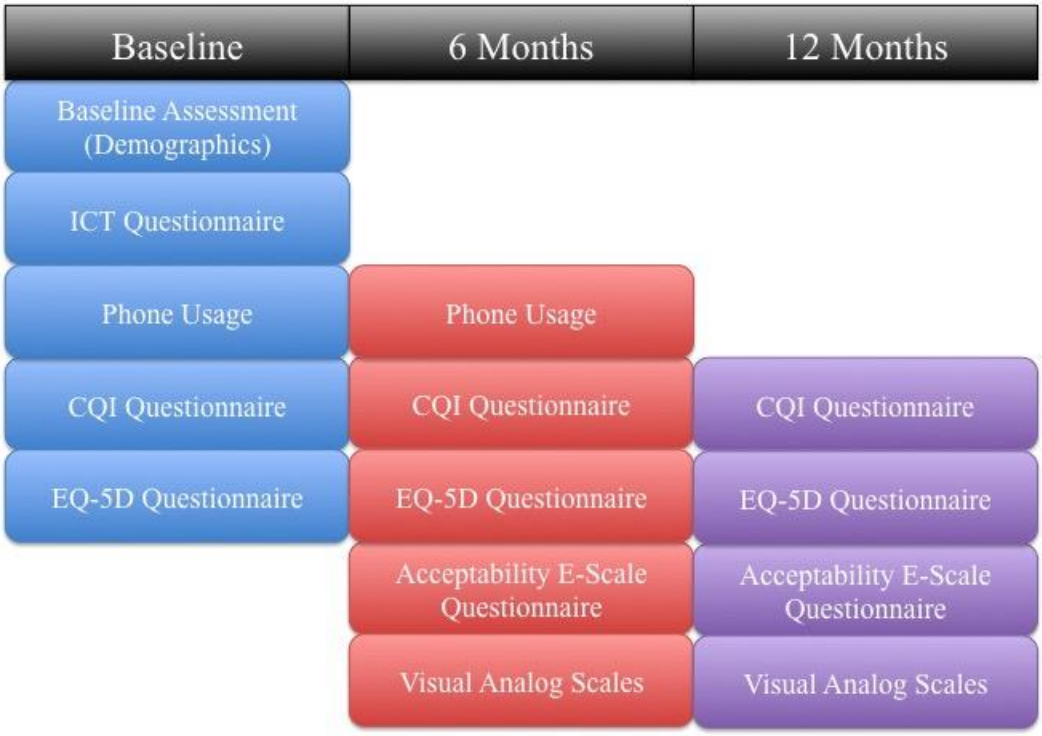
Figure A: Timeline of assessment of study participants at baseline, six months, and 12 months



CQI: Consumer Quality Index
EQ-5D: EuroQol Five Dimensions
ICT: Information and Communication Technology

Table A: Comparison of demographics with patients who joined the online portal to those who consented to participate but did not join online.

Variable	Online Portal (N=27)	Did not join Portal (n=14)	p-value
Age at dialysis initiation	54.67 (50.52-58.81)	56.64 (48.83-64.45)	0.61
Age at time of study consent	57.11 (53.15-61.08)	58.86 (51.06-66.65)	0.64
Sex (Female)	13 (48.15%)	9 (64.29%)	0.33
Hypertension	23 (85.19%)	8 (61.54%)	0.09
Coronary Artery Disease	6 (22.22%)	6 (42.86%)	0.17
Cerebrovascular Disease	1 (3.7%)	1 (7.14%)	0.63
Peripheral Vascular Disease	4 (14.81%)	2 (14.29%)	0.96
Diabetes	12 (44.44%)	5 (35.71%)	0.59
Failed Kidney Transplant	6 (14.29%)	2 (22.22%)	0.54
Home Hemodialysis	10 (37%)	10 (71%)	
Congestive Heart Failure	3 (11.11%)	2 (14.29%)	0.77
Smoker	4 (14.81%)	2 (14.29%)	0.96
Median distance to home dialysis unit (km)	81 (IQR: 13-131)	83.7 (10.9-149)	0.79
Median time to home dialysis unit (min)	70 (IQR: 22-110)	73 (22-107)	0.74

Table B: Use of Information and Communication Technology in the past six months (n=21)

	Used on Desktop/ Laptop	Used on Handheld Device	Used on Both	Not Used
Email/email lists (email mailing lists)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	6 (28.6%)	1 (4.8%)
Secure internet messaging	5 (23.8%)	2 (9.5%)	5 (23.8%)	9 (42.9%)
Message boards (web pages to list questions and view answers)	7 (33.3%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)	11(52.4%)
Chat services (e.g. MSN messenger, Google Talk)	-	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)	18(85.7%)
Social Networking sites (e.g. Facebook)	9 (42.9%)	2 (9.5%)	6 (28.6%)	4(19.1%)
Blogs and microblogs (e.g. twitter)	2(9.5%)	4 (19.0%)	1 (4.8%)	14(66.7%)
Internet based voice calls (e.g. Skype, Google Talk)	7 (33.3%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (4.8%)	12(57.1%)
Video sharing (e.g. YouTube)	6 (28.6%)	2 (9.5%)	5 (23.8%)	8 (38.1%)
Web or video conferencing (e.g. Skype)	5 (23.8%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)	13(61.9%)
Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia)	6 (28.6%)	2(9.5%)	4(19.1%)	9 (42.9%)

Table C: Additional Information and Communication Technology data on participants of the online portal (n=27)

In the last 2 months have you used Telephone calls (e.g. calls on a landline, cell phone) to collaborate (includes learning) or interact with health care staff (mentors and mentees included)?	**Yes**	**No**	
	17 (74.0%)	6 (26.0%)	
Among those who answered 'Yes' to above	**Fixed line conventional phone**	**Cellular/mobile phone service**	Both
In the last 2 months how do you make telephone calls to any members of health care staff	10 (55.6%)	3 (16.7%)	5 (27.8%)

	Several Times a day	**About once a day**	**3-5days/week**	**1-2days/week**	**Every Few Weeks**
In the last 2 months how often have you used telephone calls to collaborate and interact with the members of health care staff	0	0	0	2 (11.1%)	16 (88.9%)

	Communicate to set up face to face meetings	**To discuss health care related issues**	**Communicate with health care administration (e.g. about meetings)**	**To build relationships with healthcare staff members**	**Other uses**
For which of the following purposes do you use telephone calls when collaborating and interacting with the members of health care staff (select all that apply	5	17	1	0	0

	Once a day or more often	**Once a week up to one day**	**1-3 times/month**	**Less often**	**None**
In the last 2 months how often have you interacted with health care staff?	0	4 (16.7%)	10 (41.6%)	9 (37.5%)	1 (4.2%)

Indicate which of the following	**Already Using**	**Interested**	**Not Interested**	**Don't know enough**

technologies that you are not already using which might be interesting to you to communicate with health care staff				about this tool
Messaging (e.g. SMS)	5 (18.5%)	4 (14.8%)	6 (22.2%)	5 (27.8%)
Email/ email lists (e.g. LISTSERV)	8 (29.6%)	9 (33.3%)	1 (3.7%)	3 (11.1%)
Secure internet messaging	7 (25.9%)	10 (37.0%)	2 (7.4%)	2 (7.4%)
Message boards	3 (11.1%)	3 (11.1%)	7 (25.9%)	6 (22.2%)
Chat services (e.g. MSN messenger)	3 (11.1%)	3 (11.1%)	12 (44.4%)	3 (11.1%)
Social Networking sites (e.g. Facebook)	8 (29.6%)	5 (18.5%)	7 (25.9%)	2 (7.4%)
Blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	3 (11.1%)	4 (14.8%)	5 (18.5%)	9 (33.3%)
Voice calls (e.g. Skype)	5 (18.5%)	8 (29.63%)	4 (14.8%)	4 (14.8%)
Video sharing (e.g. YouTube)	6 (22.2%)	4 (14.8%)	6 (22.2%)	6 (22.2%)
Web/video conferencing	2 (7.4%)	5 (18.5%)	5 (18.5%)	8 (29.6%)
Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia)	4 (14.8%)	3 (11.1%)	7 (25.9%)	6 (22.2%)

Table D: Consumer Quality Index in three domains (Nephrology, Nursing, Dieticians) of the patients who consented to participating in the study (where 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Usually, and 4 = Always), n=31

	Score at Baseline	p-value[a]
Nephrologist's care and communication	**3.62 (3.48,3.77)**	0.91
Nephrologist explained things clearly	3.58 (3.40,3.76)	
Nephrologist provided information to enable shared decision making	3.35 (3.08,3.63)	
Nephrologist listened attentively	3.52 (3.31,3.73)	
Nephrologist took concerns seriously	3.55 (3.34,3.76)	
Nephrologist was respectful	3.84 (3.67,4.00)	
Nephrologist spent enough time with patient	3.40 (3.17,3.63)	
Nephrologist involves patient in decision making	3.32 (3.07,3.58)	
Nephrologist asks about medication use	3.67 (3.44,3.89)	
Nephrologist spends enough time on physical complaints	3.38 (3.13,3.64)	
Nurse's care and communication	**3.65 (3.47,3.82)**	0.6
Nurses explained things clearly	3.68 (3.48,3.88)	
Being taken seriously by nurses	3.61 (3.41,3.82)	
Dietician's care and communication	**3.60 (3.40,3.78)**	0.99
Dietician explaining things clearly	3.71 (3.52,3.90)	
Providing information on recommended diet	3.35 (3.08,3.63)	
Taken seriously by dietician	3.71 (3.52,3.90)	

[a]Comparison of non-online group to online group