

Challenges in Nephrology: A Survey of Physicians Regarding Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice

This survey is anonymous. Thank you for your participation! Your contribution is highly valued, as getting information from physicians working “on the ground” with patients is crucial in this first investigation of medical ethical dilemmas in nephrology in resource limited settings. The data from this survey will also be useful to inform evidence-based policy and practice in medical ethics and may be used for teaching of medical students and for academic publication to disseminate the findings. Since there are important differences between health care levels, some questions may not seem applicable to you, but please answer as best you can based upon your situation. We value your opinions, and are grateful for your participation. We will inform you of the outcomes of the survey after completion by general email.

If you have any questions or comments or wish to participate further in this project, please contact us at vluyckx@hotmail.com (Valerie Luyckx) or maglo09@hotmail.com (Gloria Ashuntantang)

By filling in and returning this survey we presume you consent to our inclusion of your anonymous responses in the study.

Part 1. Background

1. What is your gender?

Female

Male

2. What is your age?

< 25 years

25 to 35 years

36 to 45 years

46 to 55 years

older than 55 years

3. In which country did you complete your undergraduate medical training?

4. In which country did you complete your post-graduate medical training?

5. Since graduating as a doctor how many years have you been practicing medicine?

< 5 years

5-10 years

11 - 20 years

> 20 years

6. How long have you been working in nephrology?

< 5 years

5-10 years

11-20 years

> 20 years

7. What is your current clinical role?

General practice (yes/no)

Trainee (please specify)

Specialist (please specify)

Other (please specify)

8. Where do you practice as a doctor seeing patients with kidney disease? (please indicate all that apply)

- Government institution
- Teaching institution
- Private for profit institution
- Private section within a government facility
- Private non profit institution
- Own private institution
- Other

9. If you are involved in academic medicine, what is your position?

- Not in academics
- Junior faculty
- Assistant or Associate Professor
- Senior faculty/ Full Professor

10. Do you participate in any decisions on where the resources are spent/allocated like in planning and budgeting in your health care department/facility?

- Yes
- No

Part 2: Clinical practice

11. On average, approximately how many hours/ week do you work in:

	< 5 hours	5-10 hours	11-20 hours	> 20 hours
Government institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching hospital	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

12. On average approximately how many patients with kidney disease do you see in a week?

	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Inpatient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outpatient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. On average approximately how many patients per week do you see who require dialysis for:

	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute kidney injury (AKI)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
End-stage kidney disease (ESKD)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. On average how many patients per week do you see who receive dialysis for:

	< 5	5-10	11-20	> 20
Acute dialysis for AKI	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acute dialysis for new ESKD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chronic ESKD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. In which average age group (years) are most of the kidney patients that you take care of?

	< 18 years	18 - 30 years	31 - 45 years	46-60 years	> 60 years
AKI	<input type="checkbox"/>				
New ESKD	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chronic ESKD	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never Not applicable

You were so troubled by limited resources that you regretted your profession?

Resource limitations made/make you consider leaving your country to practice elsewhere?

21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements

Agree Somewhat agree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable

In my setting, there is lack of enough resources to provide standard medical care

In my setting, there is lack of enough resources to provide medical care for patients who require dialysis

Costs for the patient is important for me when I decide to use or not to use an intervention

I have seen that health care costs drive people into financial crisis

If I see that the patient is poor, I do not let the patient know about the expensive option

The financial burden on the health care system is important when I decide to use an intervention or not

I sometimes deny beneficial but costly services to certain patients because resources should go to other patients that need them more

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never Not applicable

The kidney failure is a result of the patient's life-style choices (obesity, HIV, drug abuse, herbal remedies)

23. Does your country have a national policy regarding dialysis?

Yes No Unsure

My country has a policy governing who can receive dialysis for AKI

My country has a policy governing who can receive dialysis for ESKD

24. Please describe a dilemma you have encountered in your own words (without any identifiable data)? Please continue on the back of the page if needed.

25. Does the situation (-s) you have described happen often where you work?

- Yes, quite common
- Happens sometimes
- Happens rarely

26. Is there any support structure available in your practice to discuss ethical dilemmas? (e.g. ethics consultation, ethics committees?). If yes, please describe.

27. Do you have any further comments you wish to share?

Thank you for your participation in this survey.