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Cardiac Rehabilitation and its Role in the Care of Chronic Kidney Disease Patients

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Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) is a major cause of mortality among Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) patients. Cardiac rehabilitation is a multidisciplinary initiative which includes secondary prevention measures that involve modification of lifestyle behaviors and risk factors to improve patients' symptoms and to minimize the risk of further cardiac events. There appears to be a lack of cardiac rehabilitation services for cardiac patients internationally. Research has highlighted that older patients, women and patients with heart failure have poor attendance at cardiac rehabilitation programmes (Grace et al, 2009).

A systematic review of cardiac rehabilitation programmes illustrated their effectiveness in reducing their mortality rates among cardiac patients (Joliffe et al, 2001; Andrade, 2008; Kutner et al, 2008). Many of the CKD policies recommend that patients with CKD should exercise and modify their cardiac risk factors to prevent the development of CVD. The barriers to attending cardiac rehabilitation programmes for cardiac patients include the lack of referral to same, distance to travel, and fear of exercise. More research is required to explore if CKD patients are being referred for cardiac rehabilitation and their attendance in same.

The aims of this presentation are:

- To outline the benefits of cardiac rehabilitation patients with both CKD and CVD.
- To review international policies and current evidence based practice on CKD and their cardiac rehabilitation recommendations for patients with both CKD and CVD.
- To discuss how the barriers to attendance at cardiac rehabilitation programmes may be minimised for CKD patients.
- To explore the role of the nephrology nurse in the care of patients attending cardiac rehabilitation.

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