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Creating a Patient Care Buddy Program to Improve Outcomes

Alice Hellebrand, MSN, RN, CNN, CURN, Holy Name Medical Center, Dumont, NJ

With time constraints and limited resources it is sometimes difficult to reinforce education and provide support to our patients. This was evident to us when the percentage of patients whose phosphorus was within target range dropped significantly. To provide an answer to this issue, we developed a buddy program within the dialysis unit. Each patient was assigned a hemodialysis technician or LPN to act as their "buddy". All patient buddies were educated concerning bone mineralization and the role of technicians/LPN's in providing reinforcement of education. With the assistance of their buddy, patients were asked to complete a phosphorus barrier survey which was designed to uncover areas that may be hindering compliance. Each buddy was then responsible for completing a weekly patient phosphorus report card that addressed patient phosphorus management issues. Information was then reported to the primary RN who then made the appropriate referral to the interdisciplinary team. During the first two months of the program we saw an increase in the percentage of patients whose phosphorus level was in the target range.

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