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**Transitioning from the Chronic Setting to the Acute Care
Dialysis Setting Successfully**

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Chronic Dialysis staffs have a solid foundation to perform dialysis however, often lack the critical thinking required to be successful in an acute care quaternary hospital dialysis center. Solid basic ECG skills were lacking. Historically, chronic dialysis staffs have struggled and felt overwhelmed. Efforts were unsuccessful. Retention after orientation and a significant financial investment became a challenge.

A comprehensive plan is required to ensure a smooth transition and to ensure retention of the staff. Acute Care Preceptors (ACP) provides direction, guidance and support to drive success. New staff begin by learning ECG's and provide primary care of the acute care floor patients. Then they begin to care for more complex floor patients with devices (LVAD's, chest tubes etc...). Learning peritoneal dialysis is next. Once competent, staff learns to care for hemodynamically stable critically ill patients, followed by more complex and marginally stable critically ill patients and those with multiple life support machines or devices. Lastly, they learn a new modality, apheresis and intra-operative apheresis.

Partnering a new employee with an ACP to support them for 3 to 6 months has proven to be successful. They work the same schedule and systematically build confidence and new skills. Having the solid foundation in chronic dialysis is a great foundation and sets the stage well for growth. The ACP takes ownership of the new employee and together they reach success defined as an engaged, solid performer who knows all modalities within 18 months.

New preceptors attend an 8 hour class that discusses adult learning styles, motivational techniques, development of critical thinking, learning how to write objectives, and how to properly document daily assignments. Once training is complete they will be assigned a new employee. During orientation the preceptor and new employee meet with the supervisor or nurse manager to review progress and develop action plans. Having a structure plan and process for the ACP has proven to be valuable. Investing in the ACP lead to stable and engaged staff, a win-win for all.

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