

St George Hospital Renal Department Guideline: INTERNAL ONLY

Fluid assessment by haemodialysis RNs

Bottom line

- A fluid assessment performed by haemodialysis RNs is an important skill in the dialysis preparation phase.
- The haemodialysis RN is deemed competent in fluid assessment once they have successfully completed the fluid assessment learning package and competency.
- Communication regarding dry weight change and indications will continue via the letter to the nephrologist in RISC.
- The patient's dry weight will continue to be reviewed by the medical team as a usual component of the clinic visit.

The Exclusion criteria for this protocol include:

- Patients in acute kidney injury
- Patients in which there will be a change in weight greater than one litre for the dialysis session.

In the above circumstances the medical staff are responsible for fluid assessment.

Accreditation of RNs involves the following:

1. Intensive education regarding accurate dry weight assessment
2. The mandatory completion of a fluid assessment learning package
3. The successful completion of the fluid assessment competency

The process of RNs performing the role involves:

1. Intensive fluid assessment training;
2. Identification of key resource personnel;
3. Accreditation;
4. Documentation in RISC and the clinical notes;
5. Implementation of a week per month where routine assessment of the patient is undertaken by the primary nurse. Assessment will occur at other times if indicated;
6. Regular evaluation of the process and outcomes.

References:

Campbell, S (2006). Fluid Assessment: A Competency Assessment Package for Advanced Nephrology Nursing Practice. *Renal Society of Australia Journal* 2(3) 41-50.

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Passauer, Jens, Petrov, Schleser, Andreas, Pucalka, Klaus (2010). Evaluation of clinical dry weight assessment in haemodialysis patients using bioimpedance spectroscopy: a cross-sectional study. *Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation* 25(2) 545-551.