

Physical examination of arteriovenous fistula: how are we doing it and how to improve?

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Introduction

The vascular access (VA) guidelines highly recommend the physical examination (PE) as part of monitoring programs of the VA. However, are nurses aware of the importance of the PE and performing it with the recommended frequency? What do nurses evaluate in PE? Which are the warning signs? How can they improve?

Objectives

To identify nurse`s perception about PE of VA, how they perform it and what strategies suggest to improve the procedure.

Methods

A semi-structured survey was applied on November 2018 about PE of VA to all nurses in our dialysis unit who voluntarily accepted to answer (n=17). Some open key questions were made and themes created to allow a content analysis as research methodology.

Results

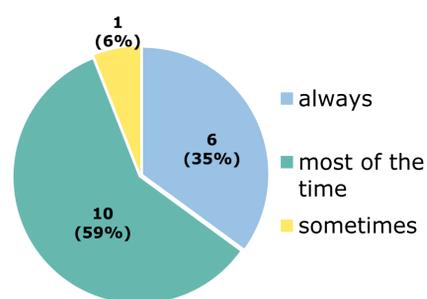
Table 1 – Sample's characterization

N=17	
Mean 44.47 ± 12.38 years	9 (53%) male 8 (47%) female
HD experience:	
12% < 5 years	
18% - 5 to 10 years	
70% > 10 years	

Table 2 – Perceptions about PE

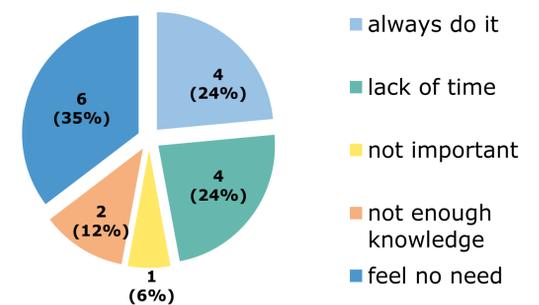
- Only 12% feel have all the skills to do complete PE
- 100% wish to improve knowledge on PE
- Perceived reliability of PE by nurses: 79%

How often do you perform the PE?



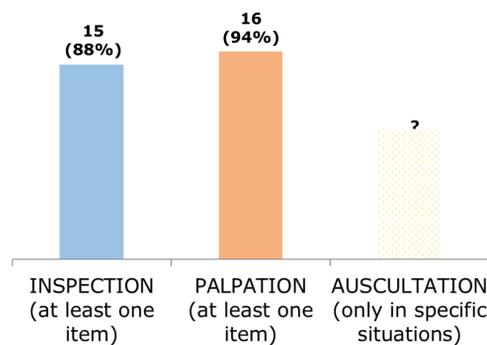
Graph 1 – Frequency of PE

When you don't do it, which are the reasons?



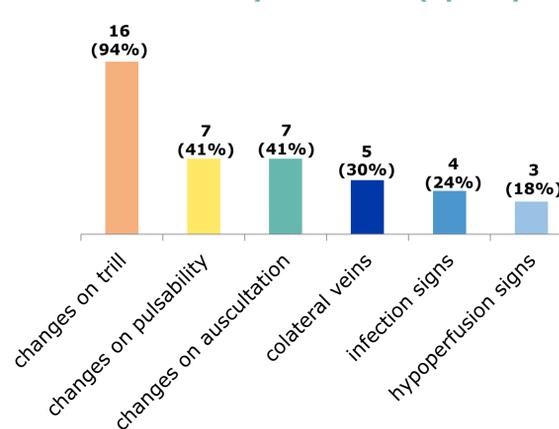
Graph 2 – Reasons for not doing PE

What parameters do you evaluate when you perform the PE? (open question)



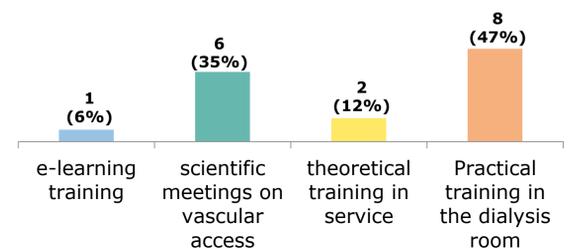
Graph 3 – Evaluated parameters on PE

What signs do you consider suggestive of vascular access dysfunction? (open question)



Graph 4– Considered signs of the dysfunction of the VA by the PE

Which way do you think is the most effective one to improve knowledge on PE?



Graph 5 – Main ways considered to improve knowledge on PE

Conclusion

Nurses are aware of the relevance of PE and practice it very often but not so complete as recommended. They feel the need to improve and be trained to systematize the PE. A training with experts on PE in the dialysis room with practical cases and the participation on scientific meetings on VA are pointed by the team as a way to improve PE practice and an effective detection of warning signs in our dialysis unit.

References

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