

A Reference Nurse Program (RNP) for Overhydration Control in Haemodialysis Patients

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Introduction

Initiation of renal replacement therapy causes drastic changes in the patient's daily life and the adaptation to this treatment is a very complex process. Chronic renal failure is a demanding disease not only because of the treatment's aggressiveness, but also because of its continuous need. Daily life becomes conditioned by the disease and the demands of the treatment.

For a better control of intradialytic adverse events and comorbidities, normohydration is a major goal of haemodialysis. Nurses play an important role in training and motivating patients to develop strategies to reduce thirst and, consequently, control intradialytic weight gain.

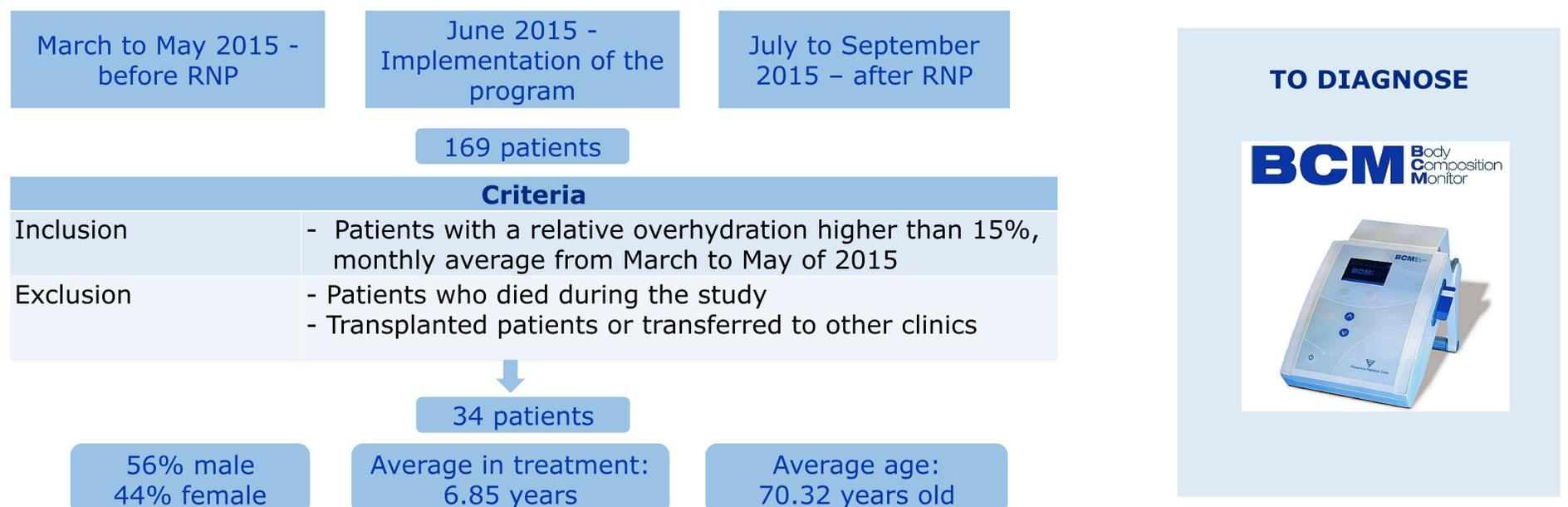
Objectives

To assess the influence of a reference nurse program (RNP) on patients' overhydration.

Methods

In order to enable monitoring and appropriate time planning for individual care plans, we implemented the Reference Nurse Program (RNP) in NephroCare Coimbra, i.e. from a nursing team consisting of 30 nurses, the so-called reference nurses are assigned to a specific shift with an average of 28 patients. A multidisciplinary team (reference nurse, head nurse, head nurse deputy, pharmacist, nutritionist, social worker) meets regularly to analyse and implement strategies to improve the patients' condition.

In June 2015, a RNP for overhydration control was implemented. We developed a quantitative and correlational study comparing overhydration values in the same group of patient at two different points in time, with reference to June 2015. After sample normality verification we used the Student's t-test for paired and independent samples.



Results

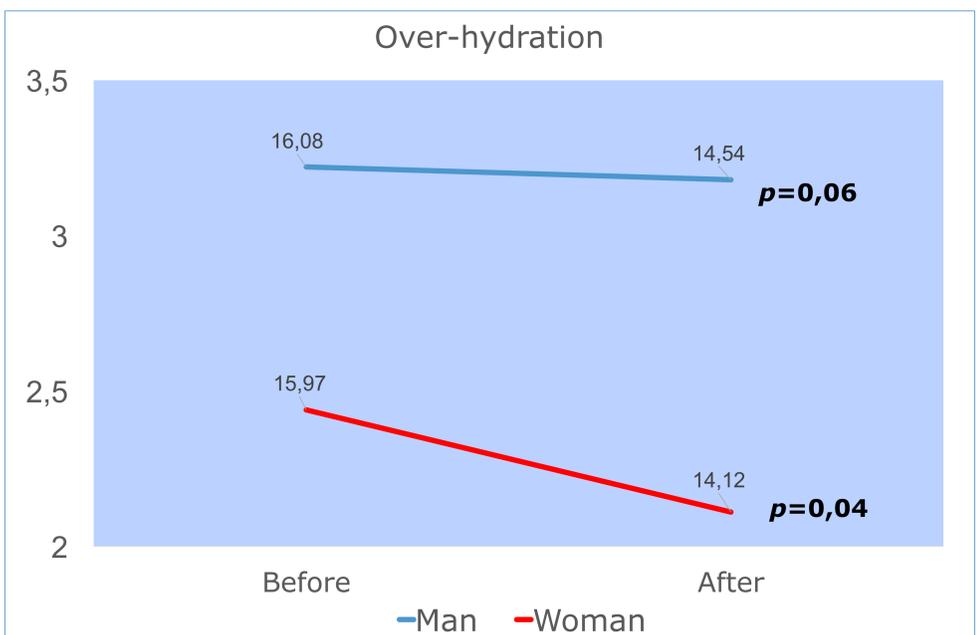
In female patients, relative overhydration was reduced from 15.97% to 14.12% ($p=0.04$).

In male patients, relative overhydration was reduced from 16.08% to 14.54%. However this was not a statistically significant result ($p=0.06$).

Conclusion

We can conclude that there was a significant improvement in the over-hydration control program. However, it is necessary to develop strategies to improve adherence of male patients, such as:

- Health education sessions (for the patient or caregiver)
- Closer connection between the team and the institution hosting the patient
- Closer connection between nurse, patient, and nutritionist.



References

1. Ponce, P. et al - Fluid management in haemodialysis: conventional versus body composition Monitoring (BCM) supported management of overhydrated patients. Port J Nephrol Hypert 2014; 28(3):239-248.