

Vascular access quality programme in a Portuguese haemodialysis centre

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Introduction

The vascular access is the patient's lifeline. Vigilance is the constant work of every healthcare professional in our clinic, "(...) partly because the complications related to vascular access for haemodialysis are responsible for 25% of hospitalisations and 50% of hospital costs in our patients" (Manual de Acessos Vasculares, 2011).

Objectives

- To assess the vascular access quality programme in our haemodialysis centre
- To promote the reduction of costs associated with complications of vascular access.

Methods

- Daily physical evaluation of vascular access
- Assessment access blood flow (Qa) (arteriovenous fistula – AVF - every 4 months and arteriovenous graft – AVG - monthly, respectively)
- Meetings and reports every 4 months (using the computer system records – EuCliD® database)
- Global evaluation map of vascular access setting in the dialysis room.

Results

The communication of changes in the vascular access by the room nurse to the vascular access team has led to:

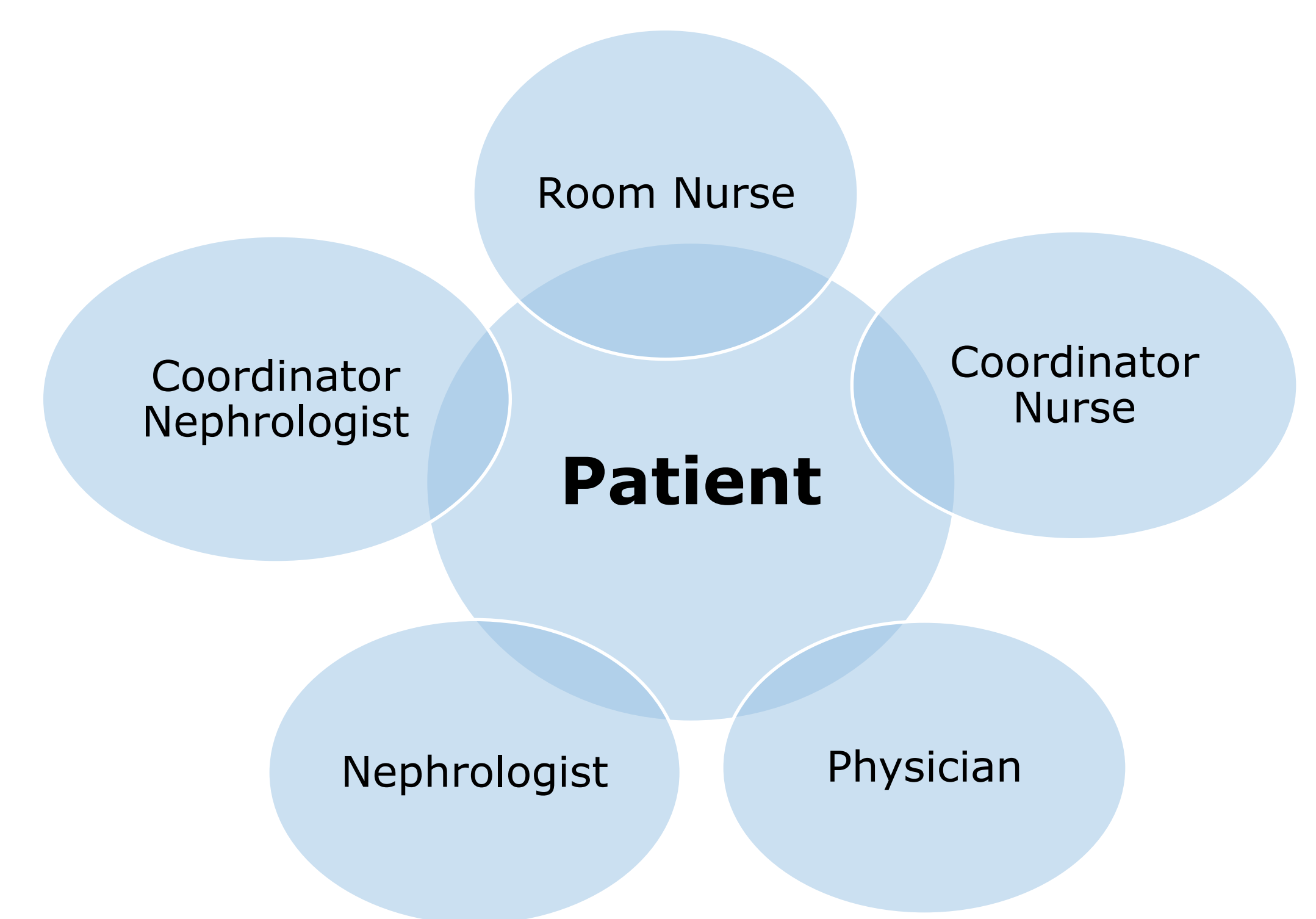
- An earlier detection of problems with the vascular access
- Planning of a new vascular access and surgical or angiographic correction of an existing access
- Strict compliance with the protocols in vascular access infection-related situations
- Improvement of staff's competence.

Conclusion

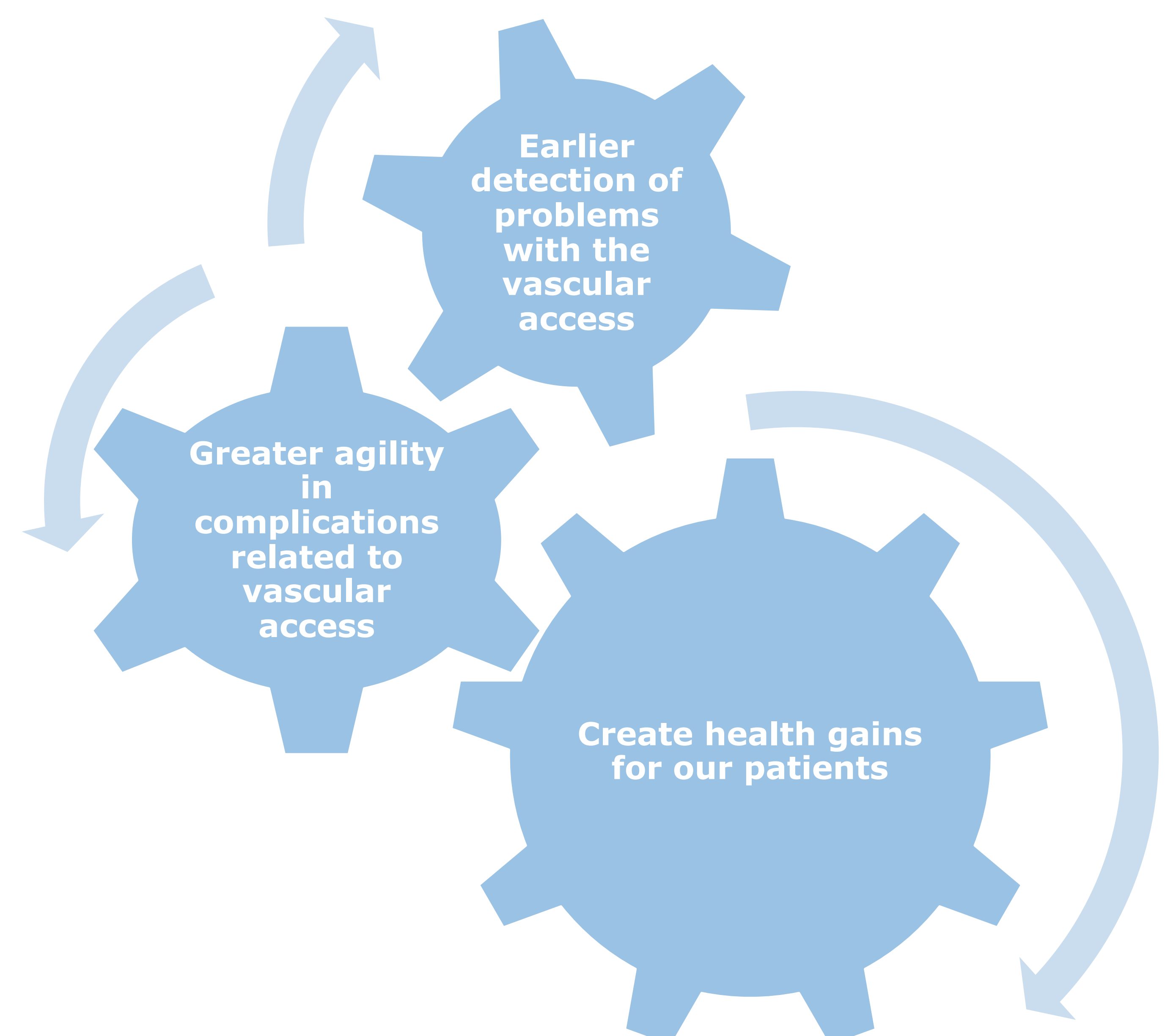
The establishment of a vascular access assessment team, the participation of the room nurse in the surveillance and communication with the team resulted in earlier intervention, significant improvement regarding complications related to vascular access. This all may help to increase life expectancy of vascular accesses thus promoting health gains for our patients.

References

1. KDOQI (2006). *Updates Clinical Practice and Guidelines Recommendations*. National Kidney Foundation.
2. CARVALHO, T. et al (2011) - *Acessos Vasculares*, In: Fresenius Medical Care (2011). *Manual de Hemodiálise para Enfermeiros*. Coimbra: Almedina, 2011. ISBN:9789724044880.
3. FAZENDEIRO, J. et al (2011). *Manual de Acessos Vasculares*. Fresenius Medical Care, 2011.



Picture 1 - The communication of changes in the vascular access of patients in our clinic



Picture 2 - Applicability of our vascular access quality programme