

Qualitative Study on the Sense of Meaning in Life in Uremic Patients Undergoing Initial Hemodialysis

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Abstract

Background For patients with uremia, apart from surgical methods like artificial kidney replacement, the most effective approach is to adopt maintenance hemodialysis as a substitute for kidney function to sustain their quality of life. First-time maintenance hemodialysis patients, due to their lack of understanding and unfamiliarity with this treatment method, are prone to developing negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, as well as changes in their perception of the meaning of life. This study aims to explore the sense of meaning in life experienced by first-time hemodialysis patients. **Methods** The study employed purposive sampling to select 15 patients and conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview data from these 15 patients were analyzed using the phenomenological approach in qualitative research. **Results** Four main categories and eleven subcategories emerged, the categories consisted of (1) Experiencing shock and loss in life, (2) Longing for emotional and psychological support, (3) Adapting and adjusting to the sense of meaning in life, (4) The growth and transcendence of the cognitive development of the meaning of life. **Conclusions** Patients who are newly undergoing hemodialysis often experience a complex and dynamic sense of meaning in life as they face the profound changes brought about by their illness and treatment. They are confronted with sudden disruptions in their life trajectories, which expose them to negative emotions such as confusion and loss. As a result, they deeply desire emotional and psychological support. Healthcare professionals should take targeted measures to help these patients adapt and adjust their sense of meaning in life.

Keywords

Meaning in Life, End-stage Kidney Disease, Hemodialysis, Qualitative Study