



Leading European Nephrology

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European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association

Kidney transplantation saves a lot

... from patients' quality of life to health care expenses

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Experts believe that kidney transplantation, especially pre-emptive transplantation, is the best renal replacement therapy from the medical point of view. Transplanted patients suffer from less comorbidities than dialysis patients and have a better outcome. Besides, transplanted patients experience a higher quality of life in general – with less complications and no need to get a strenuous treatment for more than four hours three days a week. **“We nephrologists have always been in favor of transplantation”, explains Professor Alberto Ortiz (Madrid/Spain), editor-in-chief of *ckj*, the open-access journal of the ERA-EDTA. “But now a study using register data from Sweden [1] published in *ckj* worked out another reason, why transplantation should be promoted: it is extremely cost-saving!”**

The study found out that 66-79% of the expected health care costs are avoided through kidney transplantation over 10 years, resulting in a cost-saving of € 380,000 per patient. Savings are the highest for successful transplantations but the treatment is (on average) cost-saving also for patients that have to return to dialysis after 1 year. The saving on health care expenses would be tremendous, taking into account that the global number of treated patients with end stage renal disease was estimated to be 3,200,000 at the end of 2013 [2].

The main reason why patients cannot be transplanted is the lack of donated organs which is dramatic in many European countries. “ERA-EDTA’s mission has always been to bring the best treatment to kidney patients. Therefore, we make a lot of effort to improve the situation. Together with EKHA (“European Kidney Health Alliance”) we have already addressed EU health policy and asked for a joint Pan-European information campaign. But the results have been quite meagre so far. We hope that this study might persuade policy-makers to take action.

“Let’s face it: European health policy is spendthrifts tons of money, because they are not willing to invest more in public information campaigns and to think about how to improve the health systems in a way that more patients can be transplanted. This is something European nephrologists will no longer put up with”, comments Professor Carmine Zoccali (Reggio Calabria/Italy), president of the ERA-EDTA.



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- [1] <https://doi.org/10.1093/ckj/sfx088>
[2] http://www.vision-fmc.com/files/ESRD_Patients_in_2013.pdf

About ERA-EDTA

With almost 7,000 members, the ERA-EDTA ("European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association") is one of the biggest nephrology associations worldwide and one of the most important and prestigious European Medical Associations. It supports basic and clinical research in the fields of clinical nephrology, dialysis, renal transplantation and related subjects. It also supports a number of studies as well as research groups and has founded a special "Fellowship Programme" for young investigators as well as grant programmes. In order to involve young nephrologists in all activities ERA-EDTA has the Young Nephrologists' Platform (YNP), a very active committee whose board includes members who are 40 years old or younger. Besides, it has established various working groups to promote the collaboration of nephrologists with other medical disciplines (e.g. cardiology, immunology). Furthermore, a "European Renal Best Practice" (ERBP) advisory board was established by the ERA-EDTA to draw up and publish guidelines and position statements. Another important goal of the ERA-EDTA is education: several series of CME-courses as well as the annual congress offer an attractive scientific programme to cover the need of continuous medical education for doctors working in the fields of nephrology, dialysis and transplantation. The association's journals, NDT (Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation) and ckj (Clinical Kidney Journal), are currently the leading nephrology journals in Europe; furthermore NDT-Educational is the online educational journal, open for free to all uses, of the Society as well as the very important and useful feature of NDT-Educational "Literature Review". The ERA-EDTA Registry is a large epidemiologic database comparing countries by assessing nephrology practice throughout Europe. ENP, the European Nephrology Portal, is the latest new initiative of ERA-EDTA: here all those interested in the activities of the Society can find everything that is done, all in one place! Finally, ERA-EDTA is member of the European Kidney Health Alliance (EKHA), a consortium of patients, nurses, foundations all related to renal issues that actively interacts with the European Parliament. For more information please visit www.era-edta.org