

Lived Experiences of Hemodialysis Patients at Gregorio T. Lluch Memorial Hospital

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Abstract— In healthcare, understanding patient experiences is fundamental to enhancing the quality of care, particularly in specialized treatments such as hemodialysis. As patients navigate the complexities of their treatment journeys, their perceptions and lived experiences play a pivotal role in shaping their satisfaction levels. This study explores hemodialysis patients' lived experiences at Gregorio T. Lluch Memorial Hospital. Employing Moustakas' phenomenological approach, this qualitative research involved semi-structured interviews with 20 hemodialysis patients from the hospital. Data was interpreted using Moustakas, (8) eight-step approach. The experiences of patients undergoing hemodialysis were: (1) Patients felt comfortable, (2) Patients felt emotionally anxious, and (3) Patients felt physically uncomfortable. Moreover, Patients perceive the quality of care the healthcare staff provides during their hemodialysis sessions as: (1) Healthcare Staff are Attentive and Responsive, (2) Healthcare Staff are Empathetic and Polite, and (3) Healthcare Staff are Competent. Overall, the hemodialysis patients were satisfied with the quality of services offered at Gregorio T. Lluch Memorial Hospital.

Keywords— Lived Experiences, Hemodialysis, Patient Satisfaction, Quality Care.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hemodialysis patients face numerous challenges that affect their physical, emotional, financial, and social well-being. Physically, they often experience side effects such as fatigue, low blood pressure, and muscle cramps, which can interfere with daily activities and diminish their quality of life. Emotionally, the stress of managing a chronic illness often leads to anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation. Financially, the ongoing costs of treatment can be overwhelming, especially when insurance coverage is insufficient. Socially, strict dietary restrictions and the demands of regular treatments can limit interactions and deepen feelings of isolation. At Gregorio T. Lluch Memorial Hospital, many patients have shared these struggles, with some unaware of the medical social services and support systems available to them. Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach, including raising awareness of available resources, fostering a compassionate and supportive environment, and maintaining regular communication to understand and meet patients' evolving needs. This ensures that patients feel supported, informed, and empowered throughout their treatment journey.

Optimizing patient satisfaction in hemodialysis requires a comprehensive approach that considers both clinical and non-clinical aspects of care. Imbeault and Nadeau-Fredette (2019) highlighted the significance of seamless transitions between dialysis modalities to enhance patient outcomes. Liu et al. (2019) demonstrated how

effective scheduling systems can reduce waiting times and improve the overall efficiency of hemodialysis services. Helles (2021) stressed the psychological benefits of creating comfortable and supportive dialysis environments, which play a vital role in patient well-being. Jhamb et al. (2023) showed that exercise interventions not only enhance physical functioning but also improve patient-centered outcomes. Additionally, Cervantes et al. (2021) emphasized the need for patient-centered care to address the unique challenges faced by undocumented patients transitioning from emergency to scheduled hemodialysis. Together, these studies illustrate the importance of integrating clinical excellence, operational efficiency, environmental support, and personalized care to enhance satisfaction and outcomes for hemodialysis patients.

Despite the increasing prevalence of end-stage renal disease (ESRD) and the rising number of patients undergoing hemodialysis, there is a lack of understanding regarding patient satisfaction and experiences at Gregorio T. Lluch Memorial Hospital. While existing studies focus primarily on clinical outcomes, few investigate patients' perspectives on healthcare staff competence, empathy, communication, and hospital facilities. The unique sociocultural and economic factors influencing these patients remain underexplored, limiting the ability to develop targeted, patient-centered interventions. Additionally, data on communication effectiveness and the adequacy of facilities from the patients' perspective is insufficient,

despite their critical role in treatment adherence and overall well-being. Addressing these gaps will provide essential insights for healthcare providers and administrators, enabling them to enhance patient satisfaction, improve service delivery, and offer care that meets the specific needs and expectations of hemodialysis patients. These efforts will strengthen the hospital's commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centered services.

The primary purpose of this study is to explore and understand the lived experiences of hemodialysis patients at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital to optimize patient satisfaction and improve the quality of care provided. By gaining insights into patients' perspectives, the study aims to identify key factors influencing their satisfaction, including their perceptions of the healthcare staff's competence, empathy, and communication, as well as the adequacy of the hospital's facilities and services. The findings will serve as a foundation for developing targeted interventions that address patient concerns and expectations, ultimately enhancing adherence to treatment and overall healthcare outcomes.

The study's goals include identifying the challenges faced by hemodialysis patients, assessing the effectiveness of current healthcare practices, and formulating evidence-based recommendations for continuous improvement in service delivery. Ultimately, the study aspires to contribute to the hospital's efforts in providing patient-centered care that aligns with the evolving needs of hemodialysis individuals.

Objectives of the Study

This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of hemodialysis patients at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital, Iligan City for the C.Y. 2024. Specifically, it answers the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of patients undergoing hemodialysis at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital?
2. How do patients perceive the healthcare staff's quality of care during their hemodialysis sessions?

II. METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a phenomenological research design, which, as Creswell (2013) explains, focuses on understanding how individuals experience and interpret phenomena in their lives, uncovering the essence of these experiences. This approach was particularly

appropriate for exploring patient satisfaction in hemodialysis, as it allowed for a deep exploration of patients' subjective experiences, emotions, and the meanings they associate with their treatment. By focusing on patients' lived experiences, the study captured rich, personal insights into how they perceived their care, the quality of interactions with healthcare staff, and the overall impact of hemodialysis on their daily lives.

Research Setting

The study was conducted at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital (GTLMH), a key healthcare facility in Iligan City. Established in 1960 as the Iligan City District Hospital under Republic Act 2727 by Hon. Congressman Laurentino Ll. Badelles, the hospital was nationalized in 1974, expanding its capacity to 50 beds.

In 1993, it was devolved to the local government through Republic Act 7160 and renamed Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital. Since 1998, the hospital has undergone significant improvements, including the construction of additional buildings, facility upgrades, and the acquisition of modern equipment.

The GTLMH Hemodialysis Unit commenced operations on October 23, 2012, under the leadership of Former Chief of the Hospital Dr. Anita G. Saloma. Initially, the unit operated with two Department of Health-registered hemodialysis machines and one backup machine, staffed by a team of four nurses led by Sir Holden Ian Loking, one on-duty physician Dr. Fatima Zamoranos, and two nephrologist consultants, Dr. Hilario Abel Gomez and Dr. Rosalie Imelda Z. Orejudos, who served as the Head Nephrologist. The unit began with six regular hemodialysis patients, offering two daily treatment sessions.

On August 18, 2021, the unit was renovated and expanded, adding six new hemodialysis machines, increasing its capacity to nine patients per session across two daily sessions. Further expansion on September 20, 2022, introduced a third daily session, enabling the unit to serve 63 regular outpatient hemodialysis patients weekly, reflecting the hospital's commitment to improving renal care services.

Research Participants

The study participants are the twenty patients undergoing hemodialysis at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital for the C.Y. 2024.

Research Instruments

The researcher used a semi-structured researcher-made interview guide questionnaire to gather important information from the patient's varied experiences.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to conducting the study, the researcher obtained consent and authorization from the Medical Director of Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital. After receiving approval, letters were distributed to the study participants. The researcher then explained the study's purpose to the participants and conducted the interviews. The gathered data was subsequently transcribed and systematically organized for analysis.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized Moustakas' (1994) Phenomenological Approach to analyze the data, following eight interconnected steps to capture the essence of participants' experiences. First, all significant interview statements were listed and treated as equally important (Horizontalizing). These statements were then grouped into meaningful themes for structure (Reducing Experience/Responses). The themes were further refined by clustering them based on their interrelations (Thematic Clustering). To ensure accuracy and reliability, the researcher compared participants' shared views with other data sources, such as observations, field notes, and relevant literature (Comparing Multiple Data Sources). Participants' experiences were then summarized in their own words, incorporating direct quotes and excerpts to preserve their authenticity (Crafting Individual Textural Descriptions). Using imaginative variation, the researcher developed deeper insights into the participants' experiences and created structural descriptions based on these summaries (Constructing Individual Structural Descriptions). These structural meanings were then integrated into a comprehensive composite description that represented the shared experiences of all participants (Constructing Composite Structural Descriptions). Finally, the researcher synthesized the textural and structural descriptions into a cohesive expression, creating a vivid and complete picture of the phenomenon (Synthesizing the Texture and Structure into an Expression).

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations play a critical role in research, especially in qualitative studies where interpreting participants' words can significantly impact the study's integrity and validity. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), ethical research practices are not just procedural

but reflect the moral responsibility of the researcher to respect and protect participants. This study made every effort to ensure that participants were treated with the utmost care and respect. Before the research, participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, scope, and objectives, and their voluntary consent was obtained without any coercion. Their dignity, privacy, and confidentiality were safeguarded at all stages, and anonymity was guaranteed to ensure they felt safe and comfortable sharing their experiences.

Furthermore, Creswell and Poth emphasize the importance of transparency and honesty in all aspects of the research process. In line with these principles, this study avoided any form of deception or exaggeration regarding its goals and methods. To maintain trust and accountability, the researcher was upfront about any affiliations, funding sources, or potential conflicts of interest. Communication with participants was open and honest, ensuring they had clarity about their role and the study's purpose. Additionally, the findings were reported accurately and with integrity, avoiding misrepresentation or selective data reporting. These ethical practices not only ensured compliance with academic standards but also fostered trust and mutual respect between the researcher and participants, reinforcing the credibility of the study's outcomes.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem No. 1 "What are the experiences of patients undergoing hemodialysis at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital?"

Three main themes emerged from the data analysis, revealing the participants' experiences. These are (1) The patients felt that they were comfortable., (2) The patients felt that they are emotionally anxious., and (3) The patients felt that they are physically uncomfortable.

Theme 1: Patients felt comfortable

Many patients undergoing hemodialysis expressed feeling comfortable during their sessions due to the care and professionalism of the healthcare staff. The kindness, clear communication, and supportive environment provided by the team helped them feel valued and understood. Clean, well-equipped facilities further reassured them, while acts of compassion eased the stress of treatment, making it more manageable. Participants shared that:

"A typical session for me involves getting prepped, sitting in a recliner, and being hooked up to the machine for about four hours. The staff makes sure I'm

comfortable by adjusting my position and making sure I have everything I need before starting.” - P1

“...the way the staff cares for me, asking how I feel or if I need anything, helps put me at ease.” - P2

“A positive experience that stands out was when a nurse noticed I was unusually nervous and stayed by my side during the session. Her presence and conversation calmed my nerves and helped me get through it.” - P3

“The staff’s cheerful attitude helps, especially when I’m having a tough day. Their smiles and positive energy lift my spirits, even when I’m feeling low.” - P6

“...but the staff worked quickly to fix the issue.” - P9

“...but the staff handled it well, keeping me calm and addressing the issue quickly.” - (P11

“There’s one nurse in particular who always chats with me throughout the session. Her conversations distract me from the long hours and make the time pass a lot faster.” - P12

“A memorable moment for me was when the doctor sat down with me to discuss my progress. Hearing about improvements in my condition gave me a sense of hope and encouragement.” - P15

“...but the staff is very attentive. They monitor me closely to make sure I’m okay before I leave, which makes me feel safe.” -P (16

“...Thankfully, the staff acted quickly to treat the reaction, and they helped me feel reassured during a very frightening time.” - P17

“The atmosphere in the dialysis unit is generally friendly, and that makes a huge difference. The nurses always make sure I’m comfortable, which helps me relax, even on rough days.” - P19

“A positive experience I had was meeting another patient who shared his own dialysis journey with me and the staff who also talked to me. Hearing their story gave me hope, and it helped me realize I’m not going through this alone.” - P20

Patients undergoing hemodialysis spend considerable time in treatment centers, making their comfort a vital component of care. Comfort extends beyond the absence of discomfort to include physical, emotional, and psychosocial well-being (Tabiee et al., 2014).

Enhancing comfort can improve health-seeking behaviors, treatment adherence, and overall quality of life (Borzou et al., 2014). Personalized interventions, such as supportive staff, family presence, and techniques like back massages, have been shown to enhance comfort during lengthy dialysis sessions (Almutary et al., 2023). Addressing each patient's unique comfort needs is essential for effective care and positively influences their dialysis experience (Dikmen & Aslan, 2020).

Theme 2: Patients felt emotionally anxious

For many patients undergoing hemodialysis, emotional anxiety is a persistent challenge. The chronic nature of their illness, coupled with frequent treatments, creates fear, uncertainty, and feelings of isolation. Many struggle with loneliness due to reduced participation in daily activities and worry about being a burden to their families, which adds guilt and frustration. The unpredictability of their health amplifies their anxiety about the future. This emotional strain extends beyond the physical aspects of the illness and highlights the need for a holistic approach that includes empathy, emotional support, and a comforting treatment environment. With the right support systems, patients can regain a sense of control and reassurance. Participants shared that:

“I often feel anxious before the session begins, probably because I know I’ll be sitting for hours...” - P2

“Before dialysis, I often feel weak, both physically and mentally. Afterward, although I’m usually tired and a bit drained, I feel a sense of relief, knowing it’s helping my body function better.” - P5

“The biggest challenge for me has been the long wait times before I can start dialysis. Sometimes, waiting around with that feeling of anticipation makes the whole experience harder.” - P7

“Emotionally, dialysis can be draining. It’s tough to go through it multiple times a week, but physically, I always feel better after the session. It’s a strange mix of emotions.” - P8

“One time, the machine malfunctioned, and the delay made me incredibly anxious. It reminded me of how vulnerable I am during treatment...” - P9

“I usually feel groggy and exhausted after each session, but I remind myself that this treatment is what keeps me alive, so I focus on that thought to stay motivated.” - P10

“Before the session starts, I can feel very anxious, sometimes overwhelmed by the thought of what’s ahead. But once I’m hooked up, the staff always reassures me that things will go smoothly.” - P13

“The hardest part for me has been the emotional toll of needing to come here three times a week. It’s exhausting to keep up with the schedule, but I try to focus on the benefits of the treatment.” - P18

Patients undergoing hemodialysis often face significant emotional and psychological challenges due to the chronic nature of their illness. The intrusive treatment process can lead to feelings of helplessness and a loss of control, exacerbating anxiety and depression. Many patients describe their emotional state as a "rollercoaster," with periods of frustration alternating with brief moments of acceptance or control (Sein et al., 2020). Psychological issues such as stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms are particularly common, especially during the transition to dialysis. Additionally, the social impact of hemodialysis, including difficulties in maintaining relationships and fulfilling social roles, further affects emotional well-being (Sousa et al., 2019). This significant emotional burden underscores the need for comprehensive psychological support and interventions to improve the quality of life for those living with end-stage renal disease (Alkhagani, 2022).

Theme 3: Patients felt physically uncomfortable

Many hemodialysis patients experience physical discomfort, including fatigue, dizziness, cramps, nausea, and headaches, often due to fluid removal and blood pressure changes. The needles and long treatment sessions can add to their discomfort, sometimes triggering anxiety and distress. Addressing these concerns through improved comfort measures, effective care strategies, and open communication with healthcare providers is crucial for enhancing their experience. Participants shared that:

“I’ve faced some difficulties during sessions, like feeling nauseous midway through or struggling to find a comfortable position due to the needles. Sometimes, the treatment just feels overwhelming physically.” - P4

“Before dialysis, I often feel weak, both physically and mentally. Afterward, although I’m usually tired and a bit drained...” - P5

“I usually feel groggy and exhausted after each session...” - P10

“A negative experience for me was when I experienced bleeding at the needle site...” - P11

“Physically, the most challenging part is dealing with the cramps that hit me after the session. The discomfort can last for hours...” - P12

“After dialysis, I sometimes feel a bit lightheaded...” - P16

“I once had an allergic reaction to the dialyzer, which was terrifying. My skin broke out, and I started to feel short of breath...” - P17

“The hardest part for me has been the emotional toll of needing to come here three times a week. It’s exhausting to keep up with the schedule...” - P18

Physical discomfort during hemodialysis remains a major concern for patients, often presenting as pain, muscle cramps, and hypotension. Pain, experienced by up to 89% of patients, commonly arises from procedures like cannulation, acute complications such as cramps, and underlying conditions like neuropathic pain (Gerogianni, 2023). Muscle cramps, frequently triggered by fluid removal and electrolyte imbalances, and low blood pressure, causing dizziness and nausea (NKF Patient Education Team, 2024), further compound their challenges. These physical discomforts not only affect patients' physical health but also contribute to anxiety, depression, and reduced quality of life (Santos et al., 2021).

Problem No. 2 “How do patients perceive the healthcare staff's quality of care during their hemodialysis sessions?”

Three main themes emerged from the data analysis, revealing the participants’ experiences. These are (1) The patients perceived the Healthcare Staff as Attentive and Responsive., (2) The patients perceived the Healthcare staff as Empathetic and Polite., and (3) The patients perceived the Healthcare staff as Competent.

Theme 1: Healthcare Staff Are Attentive and Responsive

Attentive and responsive care from healthcare staff plays a vital role in making hemodialysis patients feel comfortable, safe, and supported. By closely monitoring patients and addressing concerns promptly, staff help reduce anxiety, prevent complications, and create a smoother treatment experience. Emotional support and patient education further build trust, boost confidence, and foster a positive environment, empowering patients

to feel more in control of their health. Participants shared that:

“The healthcare staff are always attentive...” - P1

“Yes, the staff is very responsive to my needs. For example, when I’m feeling uncomfortable or if my chair needs adjusting, they don’t hesitate to help me. Their promptness makes a difference in my experience.” - P2

“Whenever I have questions about the treatment, they are quick to respond. They take the time to explain things clearly, whether it’s about the machine or any concerns I have, so I always feel informed.” - P3

“Yes, the staff is very attentive...” - P7

“Whenever I have any concerns, like feeling lightheaded or uncomfortable, the staff addresses them right away. They don’t just brush things off, which makes me feel taken care of and reassured.” - P8

“Sometimes the staff seems rushed, especially when the unit is busy. Even then, they never neglect my care and always make sure my needs are met, even if it feels a bit hurried.” - P11

“Yes, the nurses listen closely to my concerns, especially when I’m feeling discomfort during dialysis. They take it seriously and adjust things, like slowing the machine down or repositioning me, to make me more comfortable.” - P12

“When I raise concerns about my treatment or how I’m feeling, they don’t just brush them aside. They talk things through with me, and I feel like they genuinely consider my input, which makes me feel involved in my care.” - P13

“...the staff takes immediate action. They don’t wait for things to get worse; they act right away to make sure I’m as comfortable as possible.” - P17

“Sometimes the staff seems rushed, especially when the unit is busy. Even then, they never neglect my care and always make sure my needs are met, even if it feels a bit hurried.” - P20

The attentive and responsive care provided by healthcare staff during hemodialysis is essential for patient safety, comfort, and effective treatment. Nurses play a critical role in closely monitoring patients, enabling the early detection of complications such as infections or fluid overload, which helps reduce hospital

readmissions and improve outcomes (Barros et al., 2017). Additionally, effective communication fosters trust between patients and caregivers, encouraging patients to share concerns and actively engage in their treatment plans (Eslami et al., 2018). This approach not only enhances the quality of care but also supports adherence to treatment, leading to improved health management for hemodialysis patients (Hashemi et al., 2018).

Theme 2: Healthcare Staffs are Empathetic and Polite

Empathy and politeness are vital in healthcare, especially during hemodialysis sessions, as they significantly influence how patients perceive their care. For many, hemodialysis is a physically and emotionally taxing journey, and small acts of kindness, such as a smile, a kind word, or attentive listening, can help patients feel supported and understood. Polite and empathetic interactions build trust, reduce anxiety, and encourage patients to engage openly with their care team. This human connection not only enhances the overall patient experience but also contributes to improved well-being and outcomes. Participants shared that:

“...polite during my sessions. They greet me warmly and make sure I’m comfortable before starting treatment, which helps ease my anxiety.” - P1

“...when I’m feeling uncomfortable or if my chair needs adjusting, they don’t hesitate to help me. Their promptness really makes a difference in my experience.” - P2

“I do feel respected by the staff. They always address me by my name, and they ask how I’m feeling, which makes me feel like they genuinely care about my well-being, not just the procedure.” - P4

“The nurses are incredibly kind, which makes a huge difference in how I feel during treatment. Their kindness and empathy help reduce the stress of being here multiple times a week.” - P6

“...They check on me frequently throughout the session to make sure I’m comfortable and not experiencing any issues. It reassures me that I’m being well looked after.” - P7

“Whenever I have any concerns, like feeling lightheaded or uncomfortable, the staff addresses them right away.”

They don't just brush things off, which makes me feel taken care of and reassured." - P8

"I feel valued because the staff treats me like a person, not just another patient. They take the time to ask about my day or how I'm feeling beyond the medical side of things, which makes a big difference." - P9

"When I raise concerns about my treatment or how I'm feeling, they don't just brush them aside. They talk things through with me, and I feel like they genuinely consider my input, which makes me feel involved in my own care." - P13

"The staff is respectful and always explain what they're doing before they begin. This helps me understand the process better and feel more comfortable with what's happening during the session." - P14

"I appreciate that they check on me regularly, even if I don't ask for help. It makes me feel like they're always aware of how I'm doing, which gives me peace of mind during the long sessions." - P16

"If I express any discomfort, like when the needle site feels painful or if I'm feeling nauseous, the staff takes immediate action. They don't wait for things to get worse; they act right away to make sure I'm as comfortable as possible." - P17

"Yes, I feel respected because the staff always communicates with me about my care. They explain what's going on and make sure I understand, which makes me feel like my opinion and comfort matter to them." - P18

The empathetic and polite care provided by healthcare staff during hemodialysis sessions plays a critical role in improving patient experiences and outcomes. Hemodialysis patients often endure significant physical and emotional challenges, making a supportive relationship with caregivers essential. Empathy enables nurses to understand and address patients' feelings and needs, fostering trust, open communication, and better management of their health and emotional well-being (Camedda et al., 2023). Additionally, polite interactions create a respectful environment where patients feel valued and understood, enhancing their satisfaction with care. Research shows that when nurses demonstrate caring attitudes, it not only provides patients with a sense of security and hope but also boosts healthcare providers' job satisfaction, fostering a positive and

supportive healthcare environment (Vioulac et al., 2016).

Theme 3: Healthcare Staffs are Competent

The competence of healthcare staff is critical in ensuring high-quality care during hemodialysis sessions. Skilled and knowledgeable professionals can effectively manage complex procedures, closely monitor patient conditions, and address complications promptly, thereby enhancing both safety and treatment outcomes. Their ability to communicate empathetically and provide personalized care fosters trust and a sense of security, significantly improving patient satisfaction. Additionally, adherence to clinical standards and protocols by competent staff minimizes errors and ensures better health outcomes. Consistent and compassionate care not only optimizes the hemodialysis experience but also upholds the dignity and well-being of patients undergoing this essential treatment. Participants shared that:

"I would rate their competence very high. They always seem confident and knowledgeable in everything they do, whether it's handling the equipment or monitoring my condition. It gives me a lot of trust in their abilities." - P5

"They are very professional in everything they do, and I've never felt uneasy about their skills. Whether it's preparing me for dialysis or handling the machine, they seem to know exactly what they're doing." - P10

"They're very competent, especially when it comes to managing the equipment or handling any technical issues. I've seen them fix things quickly without causing delays, which makes me feel confident in their abilities." - P15

"I feel the staff is very well-trained, and their expertise is obvious. Knowing they are so knowledgeable gives me confidence during my treatment, and it helps me relax, even though dialysis can be stressful." - P19

The quality of care provided by competent healthcare staff during hemodialysis is essential for improving patient outcomes and overall satisfaction. Skilled nurses play a key role in delivering effective treatment, as their technical expertise and knowledge significantly impact patient comfort and safety. Studies show that well-trained staff enhance communication within the healthcare team, ensuring better management of complications like intradialytic hypotension and adherence to clinical protocols (Hashemi et al., 2018).

Additionally, nurses' ability to build strong relationships with patients creates a supportive environment, addressing the emotional and psychological challenges of long-term dialysis (Kanwal et al., 2023). Therefore, continuous education and training for healthcare staff are crucial to maintaining high standards of care in hemodialysis units, ultimately enhancing patient outcomes and quality of life.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted experiences of hemodialysis patients at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital, revealing their struggles with comfort, emotional well-being, and physical discomfort. Patients generally expressed satisfaction with the care they received, particularly emphasizing the attentiveness, empathy, politeness, and competence of healthcare staff. The professionalism and compassionate demeanor of the staff significantly contributed to a sense of safety and trust, fostering a positive care experience. However, the study also uncovered areas for improvement, particularly in addressing emotional anxiety and physical discomfort. The repetitive nature of hemodialysis treatments and the chronic burden of end-stage renal disease often left patients feeling emotionally and physically drained. Additionally, while patients appreciated the quality of care, they also highlighted the need for better facilities and more tailored interventions to meet their specific needs. These findings underscore the importance of adopting a holistic, patient-centered approach that integrates clinical excellence, psychological support, and personalized care to enhance the overall experience and well-being of hemodialysis patients. By addressing these interconnected aspects, the hospital can further strengthen its commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care that not only meets but exceeds patient expectations.

To enhance the hemodialysis experience at Gregorio T. Lluich Memorial Hospital, the administration should prioritize initiatives that address both physical and emotional needs of patients. Improving patient comfort can be achieved by upgrading facilities, such as providing ergonomic seating and creating a more relaxing environment, as well as implementing non-clinical interventions like relaxation techniques or distraction therapies. Training healthcare staff to recognize and respond to physical discomfort promptly is equally important. Additionally, addressing patients' emotional well-being is crucial. The hospital should implement regular mental health screenings and offer access to counselors or support groups to help patients

cope with the psychological burden of chronic illness. Empathy training for healthcare staff can foster a compassionate environment where patients feel supported and valued. Regular feedback from patients should also be encouraged to guide personalized care strategies that meet their evolving needs. By focusing on these areas, the hospital can provide more patient-centered care, improving satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and overall quality of life for hemodialysis patients.

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