

Frequency of nephrologist claims prior to ESRD initiation, by CKD stage

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Introduction

- As patients near ESRD, chronic kidney disease (CKD) may be recognized more frequently, yet preparation for ESRD treatment may be lacking.
- Referral to a nephrologist has been shown to be associated with the use of fewer dialysis catheters and improved outcomes.
- In this analysis we assess how frequently CKD was recognized before ESRD and when nephrology referral occurred.

Objective

- We performed this study to determine the cumulative percent of Medicare patients age 67 and older that visit a nephrologist prior to ESRD, by CKD status.

Methods

- We identified 28,613 incident ESRD patients in 2008 age 67 and older at initiation, with Medicare as their primary payer in the two years prior to initiation.
- Patients' nephrologist claims were studied in the 12 months prior to ESRD.
- CKD stages were defined during a period of 12-24 months prior to ESRD using claims containing ICD-9-CM codes of 585.1-5 and 585.9
- CKD stage categories were defined as: stage 3-5 CKD (a stage 3, 4, or 5 claim), stage 1-2 CKD (a stage 1 or 2 claim), other (a non stage specific CKD claim); and no CKD (no CKD claims).

Results

- CKD is under recognized in patients prior to ESRD:
 - 27.6% with no CKD, 1.8% with stage 1-2 CKD, 53.8% with stage 3-5 CKD, and 16.8% with other CKD.

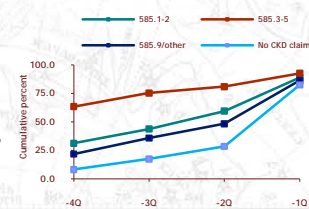
- Not all patients are referred to a nephrologist:
 - 20% with stage 3-5 CKD, 40% with stage 1-2 CKD, 50% with non stage-specific CKD, and 70% with no CKD were not referred to a nephrologist 3 months prior to ESRD.
- The percentage of patients seeing a nephrologist one year to three quarters prior to ESRD was different across groups:
 - 8.2% with no CKD, 21.8% with non stage specific CKD, 31.3% with stage 1-2 CKD, and 63.5% with stage 3-5 CKD.
- At ESRD the percentage seeing a nephrologist within the year prior to ESRD was similar across all groups:
 - 82.6% with no CKD, 86.4% with non stage specific CKD, 88.9% with stage 1-2 CKD, and 92.7% with stage 3-5 CKD.
 - This is higher than historically seen in the Medical Evidence Form.

	Stage 1-2	Stage 3-5	other	No CKD
Cumulative percent seeing a nephrologist in the year prior to ESRD, by CKD stage				
-4Q	31.3	63.5	21.8	8.2
-3Q	43.8	75.4	35.8	17.4
-2Q	59.6	81.0	86.4	82.6
-1Q	88.9	92.7	86.4	82.6
N	512	15,405	4,809	7,887

Patient characteristics	N	
	Total Patients	Percent
Age: 67-69	3,964	13.9
70-74	7,038	24.6
75-79	7,119	24.9
80-84	6,196	21.7
85+	4,296	15.0
Gender: Male	15,375	53.7
Race: White	22,126	77.3
African Am	5,192	18.2
Prim Cause: DM	11,085	38.7
HTN	10,685	37.3

Figure 1

Cumulative percent of patients seeing a nephrologist in the year prior to ESRD, by CKD stage



Conclusions

- There is a large percentage of patients not recognized as having stage CKD in the period from two years to a year prior to ESRD.
- Many patients do not see a nephrologist until the quarter prior to ESRD.
- Although there is a dramatic increase in the percent of patients with nephrologist claims in the quarter prior to ESRD, there is little time to address CKD care, manage risk factors, and plan for ESRD treatment.