

# HEALTH AND IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE QUALITY OF THE CHRONIC DIALYSIS PATIENTS

L. COTĂRLĂ

PhD candidate, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

**Abstract:** *There are a multitude of definitions for health that derive from specific cultural values, from their dynamics due to the fact that health has an evolutionary nature. Health is a positive concept which focuses on personal and social resources. Increased frequency of chronic diseases is an acute problem for all health systems. The chronic kidney disease is a major public health problem that eventually leads to dialysis. The quality of the life of the chronic dialysis patients depends essentially on the terms of treatment.*

**Keywords:** *health status, chronic disease, dialysis*

**Rezumat:** *Nu există o definiție unică pentru sănătate ci o multitudine de definiții care derivă din specificul valorilor culturale, din dinamica acestora și pentru că sănătatea are un caracter procesual, evolutiv. Sănătatea este o concepție pozitivă care pune accentul pe resursele personale și sociale. Frecvența crescută a bolilor cronice reprezintă o problemă acută pentru toate sistemele de sănătate. Boala cronică de rinichi reprezintă o importantă problemă de sănătate publică și pentru faptul că duce în final la dializă. Calitatea vieții bolnavilor care fac dializă depinde esențial de condițiile de tratament.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *stare de sănătate, boală cronică, dializă*

Health represents the most valuable asset of man and its maintenance depends, primarily, on our manner of living, on how well we take care of ourselves. One should better preserve his health while he still has it, because once lost, it can happen to be very difficult to restore. Health can be neglected due to lack of knowledge or out of shallowness or even as a result of not giving its maintenance enough thought. The evolution of all diseases does not stop before wealth and power; money can never buy health.

The promotion of health, which aims at making people healthier, and capable of participating to the social life, is performed through the development of the healthcare measures with the contribution of the entire community and of all social groups.

We cannot rest upon a sole definition of health, but upon a variety of definitions, and their number depends on the amount of knowledge as well as on the dynamics and peculiarity of the cultural values, and is also influenced by health's evolutionary nature. This fact results in the attempt of drawing up a multi-criteria definition of health and of measuring it according to certain reference criteria.

Being regarded as such, health is presented as a resource of daily life and not as a purpose of life; it is a

positive concept which outlines the personal and social resources, as well as the physical abilities.

Health has three wide dimensions: *biological (or physical), psychological, and social.*

- *From a biological point of view* health can be defined as soundness of body, that condition in which all organs, tissues and systems are working normally. This dimension requires regular physical activity, a healthy diet, avoidance of risk factors – smoking, alcohol and drug consumption – turning to the medical assistance services, personal hygiene.

- *From a psychological point of view* health can be regarded as the harmony between the daily behaviour and the fundamental values of the life chosen by the individual. It represents that state of man, in which his ability of fruitfully working, studying or performing his favourite activities, is most propitious. It involves the person's ability to understand her emotions and to know how to face daily problems; furthermore it requires self-possession and a specific way of dealing with problems and stressful situations, without resorting to alcohol and/or drugs in order to get through the day, and in addition to this, it takes the ability to love, feel empathy and have a reasonable degree of personal independence.

## Chronic diseases management

The increasing frequency of chronic diseases represents an acute problem of the entire world. The chronic diseases are those having a dull evolution and a permanent character. Among the most known chronic diseases we can find: diabetes, asthma, arthritis, madness and a series of neurological affections, chronic renal insufficiency. Having a chronic disease may have a strong impact on the individual's life and on his family too. The frequency with which a disease becomes chronic increases together with the age. Many old people have to face more than one chronic disease, which means that they have to deal with both medical and social problems.

At the same time, taking care of the chronic patients requires the most important part of health expenses. In Romania, this fact is outlined by the number of crisis concerning the provision with medicines, especially for these sick persons (who pay only a part of the price of the medicines or even have them for free, etc.). Up to now, all the solutions that were adopted had a bureaucratic pattern, and did not ground their research on scientific bases, modern

## CLINICAL ASPECTS

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from both a medical and an economical point of view. The backbone of solving this problem is the implementation of the modern system of treatment of chronic diseases, known as Chronic Diseases Management, which follows the principles of the evidence-based medicine (Evidence – Based Disease Management). The improvement of the services and healthcares of chronic patients will not only result in the diminution of bureaucracy but also in the rise of efficiency of hospitals' management.

The core of this system consists of the following elements:

- Education of the patient;
- Use of clinical medical practice guidelines (evidence-based);
- Appropriate investigation;
- Provision of medicines and services.

It is said that the resources are more efficiently used if the patient becomes the pivot around which the medical cares are organized. This technology was used for the first time in USA and Great Britain and recently also in a number of European countries (Germany, Netherlands etc.).

An efficient management of the chronic diseases can be useful in preventing the system's crisis and in improving the life quality of those suffering of chronic diseases. The main elements of an efficacious program of management must embody:

- The rules and procedures of medical practice;
- Informational systems easily reachable by patients;
- Adequate methods for the permanent improvement of clinic audit;
- Education and counselling of the patient.

### **Chronic kidney disease and dialysis**

The chronic kidney disease is a public health problem of paramount importance because it affects 10% of the population and eventually leads to dialysis. In Romania over 7.000 patients survive a treatment by means of dialysis, provided in 72 centres all over the country. The life quality of chronic dialysis patients depends essentially on the terms of treatment. At present, the majority of the dialysis centres are overcrowded, possess worn out equipments, and the spaces for treatment do not observe the European rules. In the past years no dialysis centre was established despite the fact that the number of patients is annually increasing with 5-10%.

### **The private dialysis changes the life quality**

The Ministry of Health plans on privatizing all dialysis centres in Romania, considering that this will be in the patients' best interest. The Ministry of Health believes that the private firms will make considerable investments and will bring streets ahead technologies in order to maintain the contract of dialysis which are paid with funds from the National Health Insurance House budget. The forums in Bucharest claim that the privatization is the only solution for modernizing the dialysis system.

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