

# TOWARDS GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT: FACTORS BEHIND THE EMPLOYABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF HIRING PATIENTS WITH CKD

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## Introduction/Background

- Employment prevalence is low (10-30%) among patients diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) (Lakshmi et al., 2017).
- Employment is also associated with multiple positive patient outcomes, such as enhanced quality of life, economic stability, emotional state, and self-esteem, whereas unemployment is associated with adverse negative outcomes in the above areas (Lakshmi et al., 2017).
- Through NKF's Patient Employment Rehabilitation Programme (PERP), patients on both Hemodialysis (HD) and Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) are provided with access to employment with inclusive hiring, flexi-work arrangements (e.g. flexi-hours and telework), financial aid (e.g. subsidies, allowances, and incentives), and social support (e.g. Counsellors and Medical Social Workers), on top of the standard care plan provided by the Nursing and Clinical Affairs staff.
- However, employment rates among NKF's eligible patients remain low, despite the above support that are typically effective in increasing employment rates (Morton et al., 2017)
- There is also limited literature behind factors that can further improve the employability (i.e. rates of successful job placements) and sustainability (i.e. length retention in the same job) of working with CKD patients.
- As such, this research aims to examine factors that affect 2 facets of CKD patients' employability: (1) employment challenges; and (2) sustainability of employment.

## Methods

- Patients in PERP would be screened for depression, anxiety, self-efficacy, and low energy levels using the Depression and Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS), General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), and Kidney Disease and Quality of Life (KDQoL) questionnaire.
- A logistic regression would be conducted to analyze if depression, anxiety, reduced energy levels, demographics, comorbidities, and presence of amputations are significantly associated with patients' employment status.
- A multiple regression would be conducted to investigate if patients' treatment modality, demographics, and level of financial (total amount of subsidies) and social support (presence of caregiver support) are significant predictors of patients' length of employment.
- All models would be adjusted for the following covariates: Patients' demographics (e.g. age, gender, employment status, treatment modality, socio-economic status), comorbidities (e.g. diabetes, coronary artery disease) and amputations.

## Results

- 2 key outcomes are assessed in this study – patients' employability (i.e. rates of successful job placements) and sustainability (i.e. length of retention in the same job).
- Expected results 1: Lower levels of depression, anxiety, comorbidities, amputations, and higher levels of self-efficacy, energy and support are expected to predict enhanced employability.
- Expected results 2: Higher levels of energy, self-efficacy and support, being on PD, and lower levels of depression, anxiety, comorbidities and amputations are expected to predict enhanced sustainability in job placements.

## Conclusion/Future Directions

- The results of this research will be used to shed light on gaps in existing knowledge and programmes, and direct efforts on refining said programmes to better empower CKD patients towards gainful employment.
- Future studies can investigate methods to improve significant predictors of patients' employability and sustainability.
- Future research may also look into preventive measures of low sustainability (e.g. patients resigning from their jobs), and/or low employability (e.g. patients rejecting job opportunities due to low self-efficacy).

## Reference

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