

Abstract:

Since August 1984 patients with end-stage renal disease in Kenya have been started on haemodialysis with a view to renal transplantation. In a two year period (August 1984-August 1986) 77 patients mean age 29.6 years (49 males), have been dialysed. The mean duration on dialysis prior to death or transplantation was 2.9 months (range 1 day to 11 months). Fifty patients (65%) died while on dialysis, including 2 who had had unsuccessful transplantation. Fourteen patients were still on dialysis, 11 had discharged themselves to peripheral hospitals for conservative management, and 2 had had successful renal transplantation. The possible causes of this abysmal experience include admission of critically ill patients, shortage of trained staff, over-dependence on arteriovenous shunts for vascular access, lack of centralization of patient management, recurrent shortage of essential equipment and reagents and a slow pace of transplantation.