Project Title: Patient perspectives on self-management after kidney transplantation: thematic synthesis of qualitative research

Host School/ Institute
Sydney School of Public Health

Address: Sydney School of Public Health at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead Clinical School, Westmead, 2145


Personal Supervisor: Associate Professor Allison Tong

Phone: 02 9845 1482 Email: allison.tong@sydney.edu.au

Co-supervisors: Professor Jonathan Craig

Project Type: Literature Review, Qualitative Analysis, Clinical

Project Category: Chronic Diseases/Illness, Nephrology/Urology, Public Health, Mental Health

Project Keywords:
1. qualitative research
2. transplantation
3. systematic review
4. patient perspectives
5. kidney disease

Project Description:
Kidney transplantation offers patients the optimum life expectancy, graft survival and quality of life outcomes compared to dialysis. However, life after transplantation requires a complex medication and self-care regimen to maintain a functioning graft. Up to 50% of acute rejection episodes involve problems with treatment management. Immunosuppression is associated with an increased risk of infection, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer, and other side-effects. Transplant recipients are also required to maintain good hydration, a low salt and low cholesterol diet, regular exercise, vigilant monitoring of symptoms, sun protection, and attend follow-up evaluations. Understanding the challenges and barriers of self-management from the patients’ perspective can inform patient-centred self-management interventions to improve treatment and health outcomes in kidney transplantation.

Qualitative research can offer rich narrative data to provide an in-depth insight about patients’ perspectives on managing their treatment after transplantation. Thematic synthesis of multiple qualitative studies can generate a diversity of insight on participants’ perspectives and involves high level analytical abstraction of findings derived from primary qualitative studies.

This study will involve a comprehensive search to identify all relevant qualitative studies on patients’ perspectives on managing their treatment after transplantation, critical appraisal of eligible studies, coding and analysing qualitative data with the use of computer software. The student will co-author the manuscript for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, and may have the opportunity to present at conferences. The student will gain research skills in literature searching, critical appraisal of qualitative research, coding qualitative data using computer software, synthesis of qualitative research, research presentation, manuscript writing, reference management; and a broad understanding of qualitative research methods and methodology.