



**BC Renal Agency**

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **Home Hemodialysis an Increasingly Popular Option for Kidney Patients**

The number of patients with end-stage kidney disease in BC who receive hemodialysis in their homes has risen by 189 percent in the past year. And that number is expected to almost double again by next spring.

At present, 78 patients are on home hemodialysis through the independent dialysis program, a groundbreaking initiative developed last year by the BC Provincial Renal Agency (BCPRA) and renal care providers across the province.

“The success of our independent dialysis program has surpassed all of our expectations,” says Dr. Michael Copland, provincial medical director of the independent dialysis program. “Even some of our most seriously compromised patients are opting for home-based hemodialysis, and doing extremely well with it.”

With the costs of independent dialysis being so much lower than for traditional hospital-based dialysis, overall costs for dialysis in BC are expected to be reduced by \$1.2 million this year.

With the launch of the home hemodialysis program last year, BC patients now have the option of two modes of independent dialysis: hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis, both of which offer greater convenience and improved outcomes for patients.

Peritoneal dialysis is a good option for patients who appreciate the freedom and flexibility to manage dialysis within the context of busy lives, including work, family and even travel,” says Dr. Suneet Singh, medical director of the PD program at Vancouver Hospital and a member of the BCPRA PD clinicians group. “PD is a very transportable treatment as the necessary supplies can be delivered almost anywhere the patient needs.” More than 600 BC patients are currently on peritoneal dialysis.

“The convenience of these two modes of home dialysis means patients can cleanse their blood more often and for longer periods of time than is usually possible at clinics away from the home,” says Dr. Adeera Levin, executive director of the BCPRA. As a result, home dialysis comes closer to mimicking the function of healthy kidneys.

Patients on home dialysis also experience other benefits, including improved energy levels, a reduced need for medications, fewer dietary restrictions, and fewer unpleasant side effects such as cramping and nausea that often occur with traditional dialysis, as well as fewer emergency room visits and less frequent need for hospitalization.

An estimated 145,000 people in BC live with some degree of kidney disease, and the number of patients requiring dialysis is growing by up to 10 percent a year.

*The BC Provincial Renal Agency (BCPRA), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, plans and coordinates the care of people with kidney disease throughout the province to ensure equitable access to high quality care.*

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