Interior Health

Information Brief

For Board of Directors

Version: 1.0 (Jan 2016)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title	Paving the Way – Telehealth Visits for Post (Kidney) Transplant Patients
Purpose	A pilot project was undertaken to support patients living with a kidney transplant in remote communities in the Kootenays using Telehealth to provide on-going follow-up care. The kidney transplant clinic is located in Trail, which covers the East Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary catchment areas.
Top Risks	1. Patient Safety and Care Management
Lead	Kim McDuff, BSN – Pre & Post Kidney Transplant Clinic Redesign Project Coordinator Christine Topley – Clinical/Project Lead, IH Renal Services
Sponsor	Paula James – Regional Director, IH Renal Services

BACKGROUND

It is imperative that post-kidney transplant patients have routine follow up with a renal multidisciplinary team, including the Nephrologist, to monitor the patients' blood work and medication, as well as the overall well-being of the patient. Extended travel and associated costs, road conditions and/or time off work were highlighted as key factors that impact these patients' ability to attend their clinic appointments as scheduled in Trail.

DISCUSSION

The Trail Transplant Clinic identified an opportunity to enhance the care of the post-kidney transplant recipients that live in the Cranbrook area by offering clinic visits by Telehealth. Telehealth clinic visits would allow the renal transplant team in Trail to provide regular follow-up care, while reducing the need for these patients to drive long distances to the Trail Transplant Clinic. The success of this project was assisted by the collaboration of BC Transplant (BCT), IH Telehealth Services, the Trail Kidney Transplant program team, and the patients.

The Trail Transplant Clinic Telehealth Pilot ran from December 2014 to May 2015, during which time Telehealth clinics were scheduled once every six weeks. Telehealth appointments were conducted using the Telehealth rooms at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) and the Cranbrook Wellness Centre; the Telehealth visits were conducted by the Trail Transplant Clinic team at the KBRH site and facilitated at the Cranbrook site by the CKD (non-dialysis care) clinic RN. The patients were selected because they agreed to participate in this pilot, and met BC Transplant Inclusion Criteria for Telehealth Follow-up visits.

EVALUATION

The patient was asked to complete a survey following their Telehealth clinic appointment during the period of the pilot. Ten of the 11 participants completed the survey. The responses supported the need for the Telehealth clinic to continue, which they currently do using current resources. This project will also help to inform BCT, and BCPRA (BC Provincial Renal Agency) to support Telehealth services in other areas of health care management (e.g. facilitating remote Peritoneal Dialysis Clinics).