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CELEBRATING THE WORLD KIDNEY DAY DURING COVID-19: THE IMPACT ON CAREGIVERS AND ON THE PATIENTS THEY CARE FOR

Celebrating the World Kidney Day in 2021, promoting awareness of kidney disease and the lives of these patients, cannot ignore the issue of what implications the Covid-19 pandemic has had for dialysis or transplant patients and their carers.

Two series of webinars on this theme are organized and promoted from the partnership of Ecaris project (funded by the European Union through the Erasmus + program, Project n° 2019-1-EL01-KA204-062967), which focus on the needs and problems faced by family caregivers and professionals working with patients with CKN and ESRD (Kidney disease at the terminal stage) from Greece, Spain, Denmark and Italy.



The first series of webinars took place in November with the aim of informing and highlighting the difficult situation that patients and caregivers are going through in this complex period, with a specific focus on patients with kidney disease. The second series will take place March 23th, 24th and 25th and will explore further topics such as vaccination for CKD patients.



What was discussed in these seminars?

They focused primarily on the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of patients, their caregivers and the work of health care professionals. A further focus was placed on the nutrition of patients with kidney disease and on establishing effective communication between doctor and patient/caregiver. We believe that these issues are extremely relevant not only to renal patients, but also to their caregivers, who often have to provide important practical and psychological support to their loved ones.

What role has Covid-19 played in the lives of carers?

Recent research has been carried out in this field, as carers and patients had to modify and sometimes disrupt their daily lives, trying to manage risk and adapt to new situations and needs. The impact has not only been practical, for example in terms of loss of home care and closure of many support services, but also and above all physical and psychological. On the one hand, carers have often reported increased fatigue, loss of sleep and muscle aches and pains, and on the other hand, stress, fears and frustration have increased due to increased concern for their loved one and fear of falling ill.



“COVID-19 HAS HAD A STRONG

NEGATIVE IMPACT ON FAMILY CAREGIVERS

EXACERSTERBATING EXISTING CRITICAL SITUATIONS”

Licia Boccaletti , president of the cooperative Anziani e non solo, dedicated her speech to this topic, reporting: “Covid-19 has had a strong negative impact on family caregivers, exacerbating existing critical situations. Experience should now teach us to consider the role of caregivers in emergencies, investing in making services more resilient and flexible”

What we can do in response to this emergency?

We believe that it is extremely important to strengthen networks, to increase proximity support so as to avoid isolation of carers and patients. There are several tools that allow people to meet each other in safety and we think that the use and development of these tools should be encouraged. We should not underestimate the importance of the closeness of loved ones for patients and carers at this difficult time.

Read more about the ECARIS project

Just contact the partner name and contact which is the contact person of the Ecaris project in Nation, or visit the project website <https://ecaris.eu/>

THE PARTNERSHIP OF THE ECARIS PROJECT IS CONSTITUTED BY:

Italy: Anziani e non solo società cooperativa sociale

Greece: Greek Carers Network EPIONI and Sarconic Nephrological Center ltd

Spain: Federación Nacional de Asociaciones ALCER

Denmark: Komiteen for Sundhedsoplysning

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