Development of a Peer to Peer Transplant Mentoring Program

McNeil, Kristin; University of Washington Medical Center; Seattle, WA

**Purpose:** To create a peer to peer transplant mentoring program to support patients and families undergoing solid organ transplant.

**Background/ Significance:** The transplant experience can be traumatic and overwhelming for patients and families. Peer to peer mentorship can be very effective and meaningful to both parties, however essential skills and structures are needed to provide optimum support and outcomes.

**Description:** Structured around a volunteer program for ICU patients, the transplant mentor program was developed so patients and families could receive support and encouragement from previous transplant recipients who have gone through similar experiences. Mentorship can be challenging, but very rewarding. Training for the mentorship program was designed to provide mentors with the essential skills to be supportive while maintaining patient privacy and appropriate boundaries. The training incorporated topics such as grief and loss, importance of boundaries, compassionate presence, self-care, family systems and dynamics, and medical ethics.

**Evaluation and Outcomes:** 5 mentors have completed the training program. Subjective data were collected from the mentor’s training program to evaluate the training’s effectiveness and the level of understanding of the mentor’s role, medical ethics, and the importance of maintaining boundaries. Initial data suggests an increase in all these areas. Follow-up data are being collected to measure mentor satisfaction as well as the experience of the mentee to determine the effectiveness of this program.

**Conclusions:** Data collection is on-going, however mentors have reported increased knowledge, confidence, and understanding of the role of mentorship.

**Contact:** nickers@uw.edu