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Title

Pre-Health Students Help Patients in their Search for Living Kidney Donors

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Background

Patient Journey in Kidney Transplantation

- Patients with failing kidneys can apply for transplant
- Must be evaluated at a transplant center (like UCSF)
- Eligible patients join deceased donor organ waitlist

UCSF Emphasizes Search for Living Donors

- Living donor is faster than waiting for deceased donor
- UCSF's deceased donor waitlist is long and patients may wait years
- While waiting, patient health often declines
- Finding a living donor allows patients to be transplanted quicker

PROBLEM STATEMENT: After evaluation, transplant eligible patients often experience radio silence due to limited transplant staff capacity. Without support, many patients face barriers such as language differences and limited digital literacy to find living donors. As a result, there is a need for workforce extenders to provide personalized support to patients during their transplant journey.

Project Goals

Interns Support Patients in Their Search for Living Donors

1. Current state: Many patients don't look for living donors

- Believe that donors may suffer poor health outcomes
- Hesitant to ask someone to donate to them
- What if donors need a kidney later?

2. Target state: Patients seek living donors with intern support

- Gain access to educational resources about living donation
- Understand safety net and protections in place for donors
- Know how to initiate conversations with potential donors

Measured By: Higher registered living donors with intern support

WITH INTERN SUPPORT,
23% OF PATIENTS FOUND LIVING DONORS.
WITHOUT INTERN SUPPORT,
THE RATE WAS 17%.

Project Plan and Intervention(s)

Patients need help before/during/after evaluation visit

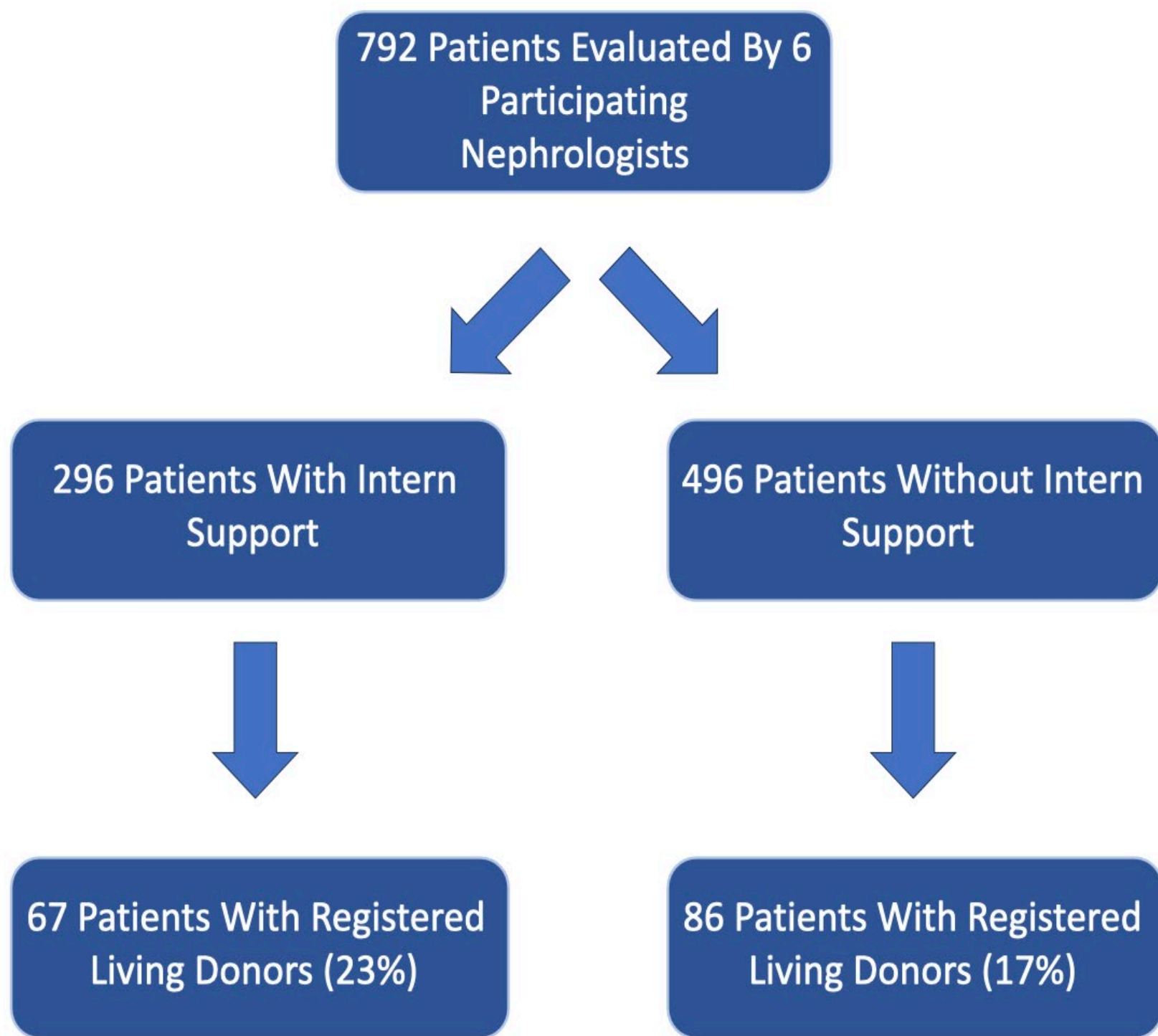
- Before: Accessing and preparing for telehealth appointment
- During: Absorbs "fire hose" of information
- After: Implement living donor search

We hypothesize that intern support would increase patients finding living donors.

- Before evaluation appointment
 - Help patient activate portal access (MyChart)
 - Send educational videos (Mytonomy)
 - Pre-chart patient questions for nephrologist to review
 - Coach patients how to access video visit (Zoom)
- During evaluation appointment
 - Record audio for patient to review later
- After evaluation appointment
 - Send audio recording and summary document to patient
 - Contact patient to review visit and coach on living donation

Project Outcomes, Results & Impact

We monitored 792 consecutive evaluated patients between 1/1/2024 to 11/15/2024 with 6 participating nephrologists. Our intervention group is patients that had intern support and our comparison group is patients without intern support. We evaluated how many patients registered living donors by 04/23/2026.



Conclusions, Next Steps, & Lessons Learned

Conclusions: More patients registered living donors in our intern-supported cohort than our usual care comparison group. Interns increase the workforce capacity to support patients.

Next Steps: We plan on reporting on a longer follow up period and additional interventions such as connecting patients with the National Kidney Registry's coaches and resources. We will also deploy more interns to support patients and intensify our telehealth patient coaching interventions.

Lessons Learned: While accompanying patients to evaluation appointments, students see how a patient's unique medical and social context influence decision-making. Throughout our intervention, we have identified other areas where patients need support such as digital health coaching (e.g. coaching patients how to access their video visit).