

## Some Qualities that make a great Dialysis Nurse:

- ◆ **Able to keep confidentiality at all times-** All information regarding the patient must be kept confidential and personal.
- ◆ **Compassion-** It is important to be able to give comfort and be empathetic to the patients, we may not know what they are experiencing but we should be able to accommodate and support them.
- ◆ **Sense of deeper understanding to life-** We have seen some of the worst parts of life and we understand and appreciate the important aspects of life.
- ◆ **Professionalism-**We are able to deal with the patients professionally and able to apply ethical practice.
- ◆ **Flexibility** - Nurses should be flexible, enthusiastic and energetic towards each other and with the patients.
- ◆ **Sense of Humor-** helps to create a pleasant environment for the patient.

It is also very important that we pay attention into giving information to patients and their family regarding their condition. To achieve this, communication skills are very important. It is also essential to have good work ethics, have a positive outlook and focus on the patient's needs.

*We hope that after reading this booklet, you get an impression of what is awaiting you if you choose to work at our dialysis department. You can contact our education department for more information about the theoretical part of*

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## Learning and working at the Dialysis Department



**SAFETY**  
**HEALTH**  
**SATISFACTION**

*The pillars defining our quality care*

*We Care Together!*

**S** | **M**  
**M** | **C**

St. Maarten Medical Center

***This brochure was created to give persons who are interested in learning about and working at the dialysis department information about the theoretical and practical part of the dialysis nurse course and tasks.***

The Dialysis Department is situated west of the Emergency Room. We are open from Monday to Saturday 7am to 8pm. There are 2 types of dialysis, hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. There are about 36 hemodialysis patients (2013). At this time we do not have any Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) patients. PD patients basically perform their procedure at home and come to the dialysis for checkups.

### Layout of the department

- ◆ 1 Treatment Room, with 9 dialysis stations
- ◆ In the middle of the treatment room, there is a nurse's observation station
- ◆ 1 isolation room
- ◆ 1 Reverse Osmosis (RO) room with 1 RO system to purify the water
- ◆ 1 storage room
- ◆ A nurses' station with 2 computers, telephone and a copy machine
- ◆ 1 kitchen/coffee room for use exclusively by personnel

### Who can you come across at the dialysis department?

- ◆ The Internist
- ◆ The Dialysis nurse
- ◆ The Dialysis technician
- ◆ The technical department
- ◆ The Social Worker

### What is Hemodialysis? How does it work?

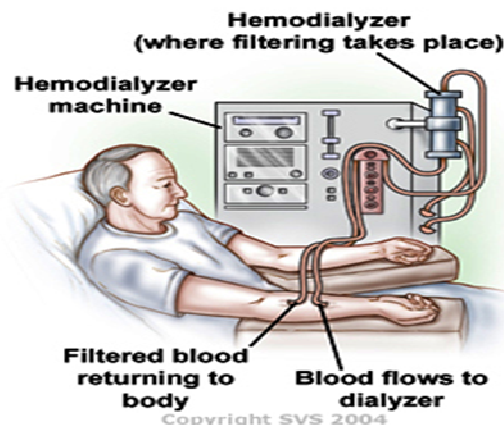
**Hemodialysis** is a treatment that is done with the help of an artificial kidney (dialyzer).

#### The Dialyzer

Consider a container divided by a vertical cellophane partition. One side of the tank is filled with blood. The other, with a solution of certain minerals and water (the dialysate bath). The partition forms what is known as a semipermeable membrane. So some substances will pass through it, but others will not.

Normal blood is 90% water. Molecules of water in our two compartment tanks will pass freely back and forth through the cellophane membrane between the blood and the bath. However, blood also contains red and white cells, protein, fat, sugar, minerals (called electrolytes) and waste products.

The red and white cells are much too large to pass through the cellophane, so they will stay in the blood compartment. The same is true of the fat and protein molecules. However, electrolytes, because of their small molecular size, pass freely (or "dialyze") through the cellophane membrane in both directions.



### What does the dialysis machine do?

The dialysis machine mixes and monitors the dialysate. Dialysate or bath water, is the fluid that helps remove the unwanted waste products from your blood. It also helps get your electrolytes and minerals to their proper levels. The machine also monitors the flow of blood while it is outside of the body.

#### Working as a Dialysis Nurse

The goal is that through the schooling, students can learn how to execute a dialysis treatment independently. The trained dialysis nurse:

- ◆ Prepares the dialysis machine
- ◆ Cannulate, connect and terminate the patient from the machine
- ◆ Guide patient and family concerning hemodialysis
- ◆ Execute care plan around the patient
- ◆ Handles patients during calamities

**Hemodialysis** is a serious responsibility, but patients don't have to shoulder it alone. It requires a coordinated effort from the whole health care team. The most important members of the health care team are the patients and their family. By learning about the treatment, they can work with the health care team to give them the best possible results, and they can lead a full, active life.

For some patients, accepting and processing their dependence on the machine can be upsetting and it can also lower their self-esteem and independence. Some patients pass through a mourning process or a difficult time. The nurse is there for the patients, to guide and motivate them through the whole process.