

## Diabetes Remains the Number One Diagnosis Among Patients Visiting Nephrology Clinic.

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### Abstract:

There is a huge burden of kidney disease overloading the hospitals and nephrology clinics. No clear data exists as to what kind of patients are visiting the outpatient departments. Pakistan is seeing a huge load of diabetics and naturally a significant portion of diabetics ultimately develop diabetic kidney disease. It is important to document such stats so as to make a concrete strategies for preventive medicine. True big data is difficult to obtain due to the obvious hurdles in manpower and lack of interest of almost all quarters to document the true prevalence of noncommunicable diseases.

This study highlights the clinical diagnoses of patients presenting to a private nephrology clinic.

**Key Words:** Diabetes Mellitus, Chronic Kidney Disease, Hypertension, mean, epidemiology, preventive medicine.

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### Introduction:

Chronic Kidney disease for any health care economics translates into financial loss. Developing countries have invested heavily in documenting the disease burden through registries and big databases.<sup>1</sup> Collaborative efforts to view the global picture through Global burden of disease becomes an eyeopener for budget planners, where the actual burden of communicable and noncommunicable disease is outlined for any country. Recently trends for decline in end stage kidney disease in USA is the result of realizing the importance of preventive medicine.<sup>1</sup>

In Pakistan the official health statistics are flawed yet provide some insight into the state of affairs. A recent survey well designed study by Aamir et.al. reported the prevalence of DM to be around 16.8%.<sup>2</sup> The International Diabetes Federation atlas highlights Pakistan among the highest prevalent countries for diabetes mellitus, 26.3%.<sup>3</sup>

It is therefore not a surprise that majority of the patients presenting to the OPD and emergency departments are diabetics with its associated complications.

This study was undertaken to document the frequencies of clinical diagnoses among patients presenting to the nephrology clinic.

### Methods:

Patients presenting to Omar hospital have their data documented for age, gender, clinical diagnoses, besides other parameters. Ethical approval from the hospital administration was obtained since there was no proper IRB forum, to safeguard the patient privacy and any ethical concerns.

## DM & Health Care cost

This was a retrospective study from 1<sup>st</sup> Sep 2023 till 30<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and included all patients presenting to the outpatient nephrology clinic.

**Data analysis:** descriptive analysis was performed with Mean and standard deviation for age using Excel spreadsheet (Microsoft USA)

### Results:

There were males and females. Diabetes was the commonest cause and patients presented with diabetes alone or with hypertension or with chronic kidney disease (CKD). Table 1

**Table 1:** Prevalence of Diabetes mellitus and associated hypertension and chronic kidney disease among 466 incident patients presenting to a nephrology outpatient clinic.

	N (%)
Male/Female	271 (58%)/195 (42%)
Age (Mean±SD)	57±14.4 years
DM	28 (6%)
DM+HTN	152 (33%)
DM+CKD	12 (2.6%)
DM+HTN+CKD	84(18%)
HTN	82(17.6%)
HTN+CKD	55(11.8%)
CKD	12(2.6%)
Other	41(8.8%)

DM= Diabetes Mellitus, HTN= Hypertension, CKD=chronic kidney disease,

### Discussion

Current study highlights the large number of diabetic patients (59.6%) presenting to the outpatient nephrology department. This reflects the prevalence reported by national and international registries in the literature.

It is of no surprise that the number of dialysis patients are increasing and adding to the health care cost. In a country like Pakistan where internal politics has marred the governance with multiple changes in regimes resulting in inconsistent policies.<sup>4</sup>

Diabetes has multiple complications and results in involving almost every part of field of medicine due to its microvascular changes. 5- This study high lights that the health care system will not be able to handle the onslaught of diabetes and choking of the hospitals due to these complications will result in delays in proving management for many such patients. It is also clear that relatively younger population is being affected by Diabetes as mean age in this study was 57 years.

### Conclusion

Diabetes mellitus has reached an endemic status in Pakistan and shown here as the number one diagnosis for visiting the nephrology clinic. It is imperative that health policy makers need to sit down and start some preventive programs to decrease the incidence of diabetes mellitus as well as its complications with health education and provision of facilities.

**Conflict of Interest:** None

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