

Working Conditions and Safety Practices

Currently, there are no existing laws in California that regulate staffing ratios and transition times in dialysis clinics. California healthcare agencies only inspect facilities every five to six years. Alan Factor, a registered nurse in one of the largest dialysis companies in the nation, states, "RNs in my clinic are responsible for as many as 12 or more patients at a time. Technicians attend to four or more patients. It's like a fast-food restaurant, with employees rushing one patient after another to keep up with the schedule. We don't have enough transition time between patients." Factor believes creating a reasonable transition time is better for the outgoing patient's condition. It also allows for proper preparation and disinfection of the treatment area for the next patient. Factor continues, "Employees are overworked and underpaid, clinics are understaffed, and patients are increasingly susceptible to complications and infections."

Dialysis Saves Lives

According to recent data, there are currently more than 63,000 patients with kidney failure who currently receive treatment in one of 560+ dialysis facilities statewide. The Kidney Project at the University of California San Francisco reported the number of kidney failure patients increasing by 5% every year. When a patient's kidneys cease functioning efficiently, their bodies accumulate toxins that could cause death if not cleared out by other means. Dialysis is a lifesaving treatment. Through a three to four hour-long session hooked up to a machine, the patient's blood is pumped out of the body to filter out toxins and unnecessary fluid. Simultaneously, the machine returns the filtered blood back into the patient's circulation. To be effective, chronic kidney failure patients need to be treated three to four times a week. Dialysis facilities employ registered nurses and technicians who specialize in this treatment.

Support SB 349! Support Dialysis Patients and Workers!

FAHWA calls on the Filipino community and our allies to support the Dialysis Patient Safety Act. We enjoin all Filipino healthcare workers to unite around this just cause to provide safer care for dialysis patients, improve working conditions for our co-workers in the industry and protect the interest of our communities. Contact your elected officials to tell them to vote YES on SB 349. Please visit <http://transformdialysis.org> for ways to support SB 349, or contact FAHWA for more information.

**FAHWA is an organization of health workers dedicated to the pursuit of justice, freedom and democracy and genuinely promotes, upholds and protects the rights and welfare of Filipino-American health workers and Filipinos in general.*