

## **Exploring Informal Caregivers' Contribution to Selfcare Practices of Hemodialysis Patients in Ghana. A Phenomenological Study**

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### **Abstract:**

Global statistics reveals 69% of patients receiving kidney replacement therapy receive hemodialysis. Selfcare of patients undergoing hemodialysis is essential and produces positive health output. However, hemodialysis patients do not practice enough self-care to the extent that their informal caregivers must come to their support. There is lack of literature exploring the contributions of informal caregivers to the selfcare practices of patients undergoing hemodialysis. The purpose of this study is to explore the informal caregivers' contributions to selfcare practices of patients undergoing hemodialysis in Ghana. Descriptive qualitative research design was employed. The study was conducted at Tamale Teaching Hospital and the 37 Military Hospital in Ghana. Fourteen caregivers of hemodialysis patients receiving care at the nephrology department were interviewed face-to-face using semi-structured in-depth interview guide developed based on the Situation-specific theory of Heart Failure selfcare. Data was analyzed manually employing thematic analysis. Three themes; Selfcare maintenance, Selfcare monitoring, and Selfcare management were generated with seven subthemes. The caregivers' contributions to the selfcare practices of hemodialysis patients lead to improve health outcomes, therefore, nurses need to acknowledge the importance of caregivers' contribution to patients' disease management and develop effective educational interventions to support them.