Group-Based Care in Adults and Adolescents With Hypertension and CKD: A Feasibility Study

Tanya S. Johns, Denver D. Brown, Alain H. Litwin, Georgette Goldson, Rupinder S. Buttar, Jacqueline Kreimerman, Yungtai Lo, Kimberly J. Reidy, Laurie Bauman, Frederick Kaskel, and Michal L. Melamed, MD

Rationale & Objective: Group-based care provides an opportunity to increase patient access to providers without increasing physician time and is effective in the management of chronic diseases in the general population. This model of care has not been investigated in chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Study Design: Randomized controlled trial in adults (n = 50); observational study in adolescents (n = 10).

Setting & Participants: Adults and adolescents with CKD and hypertension in the Bronx, NY.

Intervention: Group-based care (monthly sessions over 6 months) versus usual care in adults. All adolescents received group-based care and were analyzed separately.

Outcomes: Participant attendance and satisfaction with group-based care were used to evaluate intervention feasibility. The primary clinical outcome was change in mean 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure. Secondary outcomes included physical activity, medication adherence, quality of life, and sodium intake as assessed by 24-hour urinary sodium excretion and food frequency questionnaires.

Results: Among adults randomly assigned to group-based care, attendance was high (77% of participants attended ≥3 sessions) and most reported higher satisfaction. Mean 24-hour ambulatory systolic blood pressure decreased by −4.2 (95% CI, −13.3 to 5.8) mm Hg in group-based care patients compared with usual care at 6 months but this was not statistically significant. Similarly, we did not detect significant differences in health-related behaviors (such as medication adherence, sodium intake, and physical activity) or quality-of-life measures between the 2 groups. Among the adolescents, attendance was very poor; self-reported satisfaction, although high, did not change from baseline compared with the 6-month follow-up.

Limitations: Small study size, missing data.

Conclusions: Group-based care is feasible and acceptable among adults with hypertension and CKD. However, a larger trial is needed to determine the effect on blood pressure and health-related behaviors. Patient participation may limit the effectiveness of group-based care models in adolescents.

Funding: National Institutes of Health R34 DK102174.

Trial registration: https://clinicaltrials.gov/show/NCT02467894.

The burden of chronic kidney disease (CKD) is substantial, affecting 1 in 7 people in the United States. Among children and adults, hypertension is an important cause of CKD and an independent predictor of CKD progression. Despite the efforts of health care professionals, studies show that blood pressure (BP) is often poorly controlled and low medication adherence is common in the CKD population.

Adherence involves a complex interplay of patient, condition, therapy, provider, and environmental factors. The CKD population is burdened with many socioeconomic and psychosocial stressors (such as limited health literacy, inadequate support or coping skills, low socioeconomic status, inadequate care, or limited access to care) that adversely affect adherence. The Information, Motivation and Behavior Skills model argues that 3 things are necessary for adequate adherence: (1) information about the condition and management strategies; (2) motivation, which involves assessing patients’ attitudes toward adherence and their social support structure (or network) for adherence; and (3) behavior, which focuses on the skills and strategies to help patients adhere. Interventions based on this model have been effective in influencing adherence across a variety of clinical applications.

Group-based care, a newer model of health care delivery, provides an opportunity to increase patient access to providers without increasing physician hours. During a typical group visit, also known as shared medical appointments, individuals with the same disease or condition meet with providers at the same time. The group setting facilitates peer mentoring and support, which may enhance patients’ self-care behaviors. This, as well as the added benefit of maximizing provider-patient time, provides a strong rationale for adapting this model of care in the CKD population. This model of health care delivery has been investigated in a number of chronic diseases or conditions (eg, diabetes, hypertension, and pregnancy) in adults and children but has not been studied in patients with CKD.
We designed a group-based care education intervention using the principles from the Information, Motivation and Behavior Skills model of adherence that focused on health-related behaviors that improve BP, including medication adherence, healthy diet, and increased physical activity. We then conducted a randomized controlled trial (RCT) in adults and an observational study in adolescents in the Bronx, NY, to evaluate the feasibility and possible effect of our group-based care intervention in a racially and ethnically diverse high-risk patient population with hypertension and CKD. The Bronx is one of the poorest urban counties in the country and the incidence of end-stage kidney disease is one-third higher than the United States average.  

**METHODS**

**Study Design**

This study was conducted from August 1, 2014, to August 31, 2017. Adults (aged >21 years) were randomly assigned using a block scheme and stratified by level of estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR), 30 to 60 or <30 mL/min/1.73 m², to either group-based or usual care. Adolescents (aged 12-21 years) were recruited for a cohort study of group-based care and analyzed separately. All participants were seen at baseline and 6 months. Patients in group-based care were seen at 1-month intervals for the group sessions.

The study was approved by our Institutional Review Board (2014-3117). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before inclusion (Item S1 depicts all inclusion and exclusion criteria). The trial was registered on ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT02467894.

**Study Setting and Participants**

We recruited adults and adolescents from the nephrology clinics at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx with hypertension and CKD from November 2014 to February 2017. The medical center serves a predominately urban African American/black and Hispanic population.

**Description of Intervention**

Patients randomly assigned to group-based care were asked to attend 6 monthly clinic visits as part of a group of 5 to 10 patients. Adolescents met in smaller groups (2-5) and separately from the adults. A Spanish interpreter was available for those who preferred to communicate in Spanish but all participants were either English-dominant speakers or bilingual. All sessions started with self-care activities, including BP measurements and other vitals (including weight). At each session, a specific topic was discussed (Table S1) and the content was sourced from existing educational materials from the National Kidney Disease Education Program (https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/professionals/clinical-tools-patient-education-outreach). These materials have been associated with increased kidney disease knowledge among patients with CKD.  

Topics for discussion were led by a nephrologist or kidney dietitian (Table S1). Neither person received any special educational training to prepare for the group visits but the kidney dietitian had more than 10 years of experience in providing dietary counseling to patients with CKD.

Health-related behaviors such as medication adherence, reducing sodium intake, and increasing physical activity were reinforced at every meeting. Participants were encouraged to share successful adherent behaviors and strategized with the provider and other participants for implementing healthful habits. They were also encouraged to bring family members or caregivers to the group sessions. Participants randomly assigned to group-based care continued to see their private nephrologist. However, the intervention was separate from their regular nephrology care and group visit data were not shared with their nephrologists.

Participants were given the opportunity to address individual concerns, such as medication tailoring and prescriptions, and were encouraged to share these concerns with their private nephrologist.

**Control Group**

Participants randomly assigned to usual care received printed health education materials from the National Kidney Disease Education Program. They continued to see their nephrologist as needed but were scheduled on a different day of the week from the group visits to avoid contact with the treatment group.

**Data Collection**

Data were collected at enrollment, group, and 6-month follow-up visits. Blood and urine tests were obtained at the enrollment (baseline) and 6-month follow-up visits. Sociodemographic, psychosocial, and medical data were collected using self-report questionnaires at enrollment. We used creatinine-based equations to calculate eGFR, including CKD Epidemiology Collaboration (CKD-EPI) for participants 18 years or older and bedside Schwartz for participants aged 12 to 17 years. Sodium intake was assessed at baseline and 6 months using a 24-hour urine collection and block dialysis food frequency questionnaire (FFQ) from Nutrition Quest. In adolescents, we used neighborhood zipcode data to estimate mean neighborhood income because we did not directly ask for family income. Anthropomorphic data were measured at all visits. Office BPs were measured by taking the average of 3 measurements using the Omron HEM-907XL automated machine after 5 minutes of rest. We used the SpaceLabs 90217 device for 24-hour ambulatory BP monitoring. All BP measurements were taken from the right arm. We used Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine (REALM) and REALM-Teen to assess health literacy skills in adult and adolescent participants, respectively.
Outcomes
Group session attendance and patient satisfaction were used as the quality metrics to evaluate feasibility. We defined an acceptable threshold for overall participant attendance as ≥67% attendance to 3 or more group sessions. This is similar to the participant attendance acceptability threshold of other group-based care studies.28,29 To evaluate patient satisfaction, we used a simple paper survey adapted from the Health Resources and Services Administration Health Center Patient Satisfaction Survey.30 30

The primary clinical outcome was change in 24-hour ambulatory BP (SpaceLabs 90217 device) from baseline to 6-month follow-up. Secondary measures included: (1) self-reported medication adherence, (2) dietary sodium adherence as assessed by 24-hour urine sodium and FFQ, (3) physical activity as measured by accelerometer over a 7-day period, and (4) quality-of-life metrics using Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (PedsQL) in adolescents and 36-Item Short Form Health Survey (SF-36) in adults from baseline to the 6-month follow-up visit. To elicit self-reported medication nonadherence, we asked patients if they had missed any BP medication doses in the past 2 weeks.

Statistical Analysis and Power Considerations
Descriptive statistics were computed for all participant baseline characteristics. To examine within-group differences at baseline compared with 6 months, we used paired t tests and Wilcoxon signed rank tests for normally and non-normally distributed data, respectively. To assess between-group differences at 6 months (ie, intervention vs usual care) and determine an effect size for the clinical outcomes, we used analysis of covariance or logistic regression models adjusted for the baseline outcome measurements. Accelerometer data were analyzed as steps per hour and considered valid (ie, included in our analyses) only if participants wore their accelerometer for at least 10 hours on 2 separate days. We also performed a number of sensitivity analyses for the BP outcome, including: (1) limiting our models to participants who attended 3 or more group sessions, (2) evaluating change in office BP, and (3) limiting our analysis to participants with 24-hour ambulatory systolic BP (SBP) ≥ 140 mm Hg. All analyses were based on the intention-to-treat principle in which any participant randomly assigned to a treatment remains in it regardless of adherence to or completion of treatment. For the adolescent cohort, we performed only descriptive statistics, and comparisons of outcomes measures at baseline and 6 months were qualitative due to the small sample size.

Our sample size was not large because this was a pilot feasibility study. If group-based care is found to be feasible, the pilot data clinical results will be used to determine the effect and sample size for a future larger study. All statistical analyses were done using Stata statistical software MP version 15.1 (StataCorp).

RESULTS
Participant Flow
Of the 359 individuals (aged ≥12 years) screened and contacted for study participation, 60 were eligible and provided the necessary informed consent. The most common reason for individuals not participating was not interested/did not return telephone calls (71%). Of the adult participants (n=50) included in the study, 26 were allocated to group-based care, and 24, to usual care only. All adolescents (n=10) were allocated to group-based care and analyzed separately. Figure 1 depicts participant flow through the study.

RCT in Adults
Mean age was 62 (standard deviation [SD], 11) years; 94% were Hispanic or African American, 54% were female (Table 1), and 36% had a REALM score < 61, corresponding to less than high school literacy. There were more people with diabetes mellitus and congestive heart failure in the control than the intervention group (P = 0.05). BP medication use was similar between the 2 groups and >50% of participants were using 3 or more BP medications at baseline. Mean eGFR was 35.4 (SD, 13.2) mL/min/1.73 m², median 24-hour sodium excretion was 2,622 (interquartile range [IQR], 1,840-3910) mg, and mean 24-hour ambulatory SBP and diastolic BP (DBP) were 137 (SD, 20) and 77 (SD, 11) mm Hg, respectively (Table 1). At baseline, 32% of all participants reported missing doses of their BP medication(s) within the past 2 weeks, and the proportion of patients reporting medication nonadherence was similar between the intervention and usual-care groups (Table 1).

Attendance was high, with 77% (n=20/26) of participants attending 3 or more group sessions. Two (8%) participants attended all 6 visits and 4 (15%) attended none of the visits. Patient satisfaction with the intervention was high, with 70% of group-based participants rating their experience as “5 = great” or “4 = good” after the intervention. This was a significant improvement compared with their baseline assessment, in which only 58% rated their satisfaction with their health care favorably (P < 0.001). Furthermore, 88% of participants in group-based care reported that they would recommend it for friends or relatives. Participants who dropped out or did not complete the survey (n = 4) were considered to have an unfavorable response to the intervention. Patient satisfaction also improved in the control group at the 6-month follow-up visit compared with baseline (75% vs 54%). During the 6-month follow-up, participants in group-based care had a median of 1 (IQR, 0-2) visit to their outpatient nephrologists. In the usual-care group, the median was also 1 (IQR, 0-2.3) outpatient visit during the 6 months.

There was a non–statistically significant decrease in mean 24-hour ambulatory SBP, −4.2 (95% confidence
interval (CI), −13.3 to 5.8) mm Hg, and 24-hour ambulatory DBP, −0.5 (95% CI, −6.4 to 5.7) mm Hg, in the intervention group compared with usual care after 6 months (Table 2). Limiting our analyses to adults who attended 3 or more group visits did not change the interpretation of our results. Using office BP, which had fewer missing data compared with 24-hour ambulatory BP measurements, also did not change the interpretation of our results. Limiting our analysis to participants with 24-hour ambulatory SBP > 140 mm Hg at baseline changed our point estimate for the effect of the intervention from −4.2 to −7.1 (95% CI, −21.5 to 7.2) mm Hg.

There was no significant difference between groups at baseline or 6 months in the proportion reporting medication nonadherence (Table 2). From the FFQ estimates of dietary sodium intake (86% completed an assessment at baseline and the 6-month follow-up), we estimated that the intervention resulted in a decrease in sodium intake, −133 (85% CI, −1,045 to 780) mg/d, but this was not statistically significant. Patients in the intervention group took more steps per hour at baseline and 6 months compared with the usual-care group, and we estimated that the effect of intervention on steps was positive, 9.3 (95% CI, −50 to 69) after adjusting for baseline steps. Very few adults (<30%) completed a 24-hour urine sodium excretion at baseline and 6 months, but among those with complete data, there was a modest decrease in sodium excretion in both groups. The intervention was also associated with improved SF-36 mental composite scores, 3.1 (95% CI, −1.2 to 7.5), but this was not statistically significant (Table 2).

Cohort Study in Adolescents

In the adolescent cohort, median age was 18 (IQR, 15-21) years; there were 8 males and 2 females, and 6 self-identified as Hispanic and the other 4 as African American (Table 3). Based on the REALM-Teen, 80% had a literacy level that correlated to an educational level of 10th grade or higher. The burden of comorbid conditions was minimal; 50% had body mass index ≥ 30 kg/m² but only 2 patients reported a diagnosis of diabetes mellitus (type 1 in 1 patient, type 2 in another). Seven adolescents reported...
Table 1. Baseline Characteristics of Adult Participants

| Characteristic                        | All Participants (N = 50) | Group-Based Care (n = 26) | Usual Care (n = 24) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Age, y                                | 62 ± 11                   | 63 ± 11                   | 60 ± 10             |
| Female sex                            | 27 (54%)                  | 12 (46%)                  | 15 (62%)            |
| Race/ethnicity                        |                           |                           |                     |
| Non-Hispanic black                    | 24 (48%)                  | 14 (54%)                  | 10 (42%)            |
| Non-Hispanic white                    | 2 (4%)                    | 0 (0%)                    | 2 (8%)              |
| Hispanic                              | 23 (46%)                  | 11 (42%)                  | 12 (50%)            |
| Other                                 | 1 (2%)                    | 1 (4%)                    | 0 (0%)              |
| High school graduate                  | 31 (62%)                  | 18 (69%)                  | 13 (54%)            |
| Income < $15,000 per y                | 20 (40%)                  | 11 (42%)                  | 9 (37%)             |
| REALM score*                          | 65 [54-66]                | 65 [58-66]                | 64 [53-65]          |
| REALM score < 61*                     | 17 (36%)                  | 8 (32%)                   | 9 (41%)             |
| Comorbid conditions                   |                           |                           |                     |
| Diabetes mellitus                     | 26 (52%)                  | 10 (38%)                  | 16 (66%)            |
| Coronary artery disease               | 14 (28%)                  | 7 (27%)                   | 7 (29%)             |
| Congestive heart failure              | 9 (18%)                   | 2 (8%)                    | 7 (29%)             |
| Peripheral vascular disease           | 13 (26%)                  | 6 (23%)                   | 7 (29%)             |
| Cerebrovascular disease               | 13 (26%)                  | 6 (23%)                   | 7 (29%)             |
| ACE inhibitor or ARB use              | 27 (54%)                  | 16 (61%)                  | 11 (46%)            |
| Diuretic use                          | 24 (48%)                  | 13 (50%)                  | 11 (46%)            |
| β-Blocker use                         | 28 (56%)                  | 15 (58%)                  | 13 (54%)            |
| Calcium channel blocker use           | 33 (66%)                  | 17 (65%)                  | 16 (67%)            |
| ≥3 antihypertensives                  | 27 (54%)                  | 16 (61%)                  | 11 (46%)            |
| Medication nonadherence               | 16 (32%)                  | 10 (38%)                  | 6 (25%)             |
| Weight, kg                            | 95 [76-104]               | 95 [80-107]               | 92 [73-102]         |
| BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²                        | 34 (68%)                  | 18 (69%)                  | 16 (67%)            |
| Current smoker                        | 2 (4%)                    | 1 (4%)                    | 1 (4%)              |
| 24-h SBP, mm Hg                       | 137 ± 20                  | 137 ± 18                  | 137 ± 23            |
| 24-h DBP, mm Hg                       | 77 ± 11                   | 76 ± 10                   | 78 ± 12             |
| 24-h SBP ≥ 140 mm Hg                  | 19 (42%)                  | 10 (42%)                  | 9 (43%)             |
| Office SBP, mm Hg                     | 139 ± 19                  | 141 ± 20                  | 136 ± 17            |
| Office DBP, mm Hg                     | 76 ± 11                   | 76 ± 11                   | 75 ± 12             |
| eGFR, mL/min/1.73 m²                  | 35.4 ± 13.2               | 37.1 ± 12.9               | 33.6 ± 13.5         |
| 24-h sodium excretion, mg            | 2,622 [1,840-3,910]       | 2,599 [2,392-3,381]       | 3,381 [1,840-4,416] |

Note: Values for categorical variables are given as count (proportion); values for continuous variables are given as mean ± standard deviation for normally distributed variables or median [interquartile range] for skewed variables. There were no significant differences (P > 0.05) between the groups for all measured baseline characteristics.

Abbreviations: ACE, angiotensin-converting enzyme; ARB, angiotensin II type 1 receptor antagonist; BMI, body mass index; DBP, diastolic blood pressure; eGFR, estimated glomerular filtration rate; REALM, Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine; SBP, systolic blood pressure.

*Three patients (1 from group-based care and 2 from usual care) were unable to perform a REALM score assessment because they were legally blind. REALM score < 61 corresponds to less than high school literacy.

Data available for 24 (92%) group-based care patients and 21 (87%) usual-care patients.

eGFR was calculated using Chronic Kidney Disease Epidemiology Collaboration equation.

Data available for 17 (65%) group-based care patients and 15 (62%) usual-care patients.

Taking a BP medication (5 were taking an angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor or angiotensin receptor blocker, and 1 each was taking a diuretic or calcium channel blocker). None were using more than 1 antihypertensive medication. At baseline, eGFR was 91.2 (SD, 25.6) mL/min/1.73 m², median 24-hour sodium excretion was 3,701 [IQR, 2,713-6,092] mg, and mean 24-hour ambulatory SBP and DBP were 133 (SD, 4) and 75 (SD, 5) mm Hg, respectively (Table 3). Mean office SBP and DBP were lower; 127 (SD, 8) and 76 (SD, 10) mm Hg, respectively, but still above the recommended BP (<120/80 mm Hg) for children 13 years and older. Attendance was suboptimal, with only 40% of participants attending 3 or more sessions. Reported satisfaction with the group sessions was high and largely unchanged from baseline and follow-up, with 90% rating their satisfaction positively at baseline versus 100% at 6 months. During the 6-month follow-up, they saw their outpatient nephrologist for median of 1 (IQR, 1-2.5) visit. Only 1 participant completed the 24-hour ambulatory BP monitoring at both time points. Six adolescents had an office BP measured at baseline and 6 months, and mean office SBP was similar at both time points, 127 (SD, 8) versus 125 (SD, 10) mm Hg (Table 4). Self-reported
medication nonadherence decreased from 57% to 40% and estimated sodium intake from the FFQ also decreased by \(~800\) mg/d at 6 months (Table 4). There was an increase in median steps per hour from 499 (IQR, 111–712) to 688 (IQR, 302–1,107) at 6 months; however, this is still well below the pediatric hypertension guidelines recommendation of 12,000 to 15,000 steps per day (860–1,070 steps per waking hour) for male and female children/adolescents, respectively. Sodium intake as measured by 24-hour urinary excretion and pediatric quality-of-life metrics was largely unchanged at 6 months compared with baseline (Table 4).

**DISCUSSION**

In this RCT of adults with hypertension and CKD, we found that group-based care was feasible and acceptable based on attendance to group visits and higher patient satisfaction during follow-up. Our study also suggests that an educational group–based care intervention could have a positive effect on BP if sufficiently powered. Using an estimated effect size of 5–mm Hg difference in SBP between the intervention and control, SD of 20, 80% power, and alpha = 0.05, we determined that we would need to recruit 506 adults (253 in each group) for a sufficiently powered trial to evaluate effects of our group-based care intervention on BP. Our small sample size also limited the detection of significant differences in other clinical outcomes (ie, medication adherence, sodium intake, physical activity, and quality of life).

Although our pilot study sample size limited detection of significant differences in our clinical outcomes, other studies of group-based care models in the non-CKD population have shown benefit. Edelman et al’s study randomly assigned 239 adults from the Veterans Administration population with hypertension and diabetes to a group-based care intervention versus usual care and found that SBP decreased by 13.7 mm Hg in the intervention group versus 6.4 mm Hg in the usual-care group. There were a number of notable differences between their study and ours, which could account for the larger effect size observed in their study. They excluded participants with SBP < 140 mm Hg (mean SBP was \(~150\) mm Hg) and therefore patients had more room for improvement as compared with our study, in which mean SBP was much lower (\(137\) mm Hg). Their intervention also included a medication intensification strategy led by their group visit physicians and pharmacists, which has been shown to have a greater effect than education interventions alone on change in BP. In Edelman et al’s study, as was the case in ours, self-reported medication adherence was similar in both groups at the end of the study, which suggests that adherence as captured by self-report may not have been a major mediating factor. However, participants in their group-based care intervention had increased self-efficacy scores, another potential mediating factor, which was not assessed in our study. In contrast, other studies have shown a positive effect of group-based care interventions on medication adherence. In a study of adult patients initiating treatment for chronic hepatitis C, patients who received group-based care had lower rates of treatment discontinuation compared with those who received usual care.
The positive effects of group-based care on patient satisfaction and quality of life in adults are better established. A meta-analysis by Jaber et al suggests that group-based care is effective in improving patient and physician satisfaction, quality of care, and quality of life and decreasing emergency department and specialist visits. In our study, both the intervention and usual-care groups reported higher patient satisfaction during follow-up. We surmise that our study design fostered increased patient engagement, which has been associated with higher patient satisfaction.

In our study, the average sodium intake far exceeded the recommendation of 1,500 mg/d for patients with CKD. Low physical activity was also common among our participants, consistent with other studies in the CKD population. There have been very few published studies evaluating the effect of group-based interventions on health-related behaviors such as diet or exercise. Studies of peer-delivered interventions to increase physical activity, some of which were delivered in a clinic setting, have shown mixed results. The results from 2 of the larger RCTs (each with >200 participants) on self-reported physical activity were discordant; 1 showed no benefit of the group intervention and the other showed an improvement in a number of health-related behaviors, including increased physical activity.

In the adolescent cohort study, we found that attendance at the group sessions was poor, though self-reported satisfaction scores were high. There have been fewer studies evaluating group-based interventions in children or adolescents compared with adults. The small studies in diabetes mellitus and obesity management in children or adolescents have shown little to no effect on diabetes control or weight reduction. However, 1 study showed a significant improvement in self-reported physical health and school functioning, 2 subscales of the PedsQL, among adolescents enrolled in a group-based care intervention for obesity management compared with routine individual care.

Our study has a number of limitations. First, our sample size was small and therefore underpowered to detect differences in BP and health-related behaviors. The significant proportion of missing data and lack of participation, specifically for adolescents, also limited our analyses. Furthermore, the duration of our study or number of group visits (6 sessions) also may not have been adequate to significantly change health-related behaviors. We also...
tested group-based care as an adjunct to usual nephrology care in our study. Future studies can test group-based care as a replacement of usual nephrology care.

Withstanding these limitations, to our knowledge, this is the first study assessing the feasibility and possible effect of a group-based care intervention on BP and health-related behaviors in both adults and adolescents with CKD. The paucity of data for interventions in adolescents with CKD underscores the need for more studies in this group. By targeting a low-income vulnerable ethnic minority population that is disproportionately susceptible to CKD and its consequences, we also aimed to address a major health disparity.

In summary, our study findings indicate that group-based care is feasible and may be a promising alternative to usual nephrology care alone in adult patients with CKD. However, larger studies are needed to determine its effect on BP management and health-related behaviors. In adolescents with CKD, patient participation may limit the feasibility and effectiveness of group-based care. Potential future directions could include assessment of barriers to participants, school-based interventions, and technology/electronic applications to facilitate group-based care in adolescents.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Supplementary File (PDF)

Item S1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Table S1: Description of specific topics discussed at each session

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Authors’ Full Names and Academic Degrees: Tanya S. Johns, MD, MHS, Denver D. Brown, MD, Alain H. Litwin, MD, MPH, Georgette Goldson, RD, Rupinder S. Buttar, MD, Jacqueline Kreimerman, MSW, Yungtai Lo, PhD, Kimberly J. Reidy, MD, Laurie Bauman, MD, Frederick Kaskel, MD, PhD, and Michal L. Melamed, MD, MHS.

Authors’ Affiliations: Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, NY (TSJ, DDB, RSB, JK, YL, KJR, LB, FK, MLM); University of South Carolina School of Medicine–Greenville (AHL); Greenville Health System, Greenville, SC (AHL); and Montefiore Care Management Organization, Yonkers, NY (GG).

Address for Correspondence: Tanya S. Johns, MD, MHS, Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center, 1300 Morris Park-Ullmann 615, Bronx, NY 10461. E-mail: tjohns@montefiore.org

Authors’ Contributions: Research idea and study design: AHL, FJK, LB, MLM, TSJ, YL; study conduct and data acquisition: RSB, DDB, GG, JK, MLM, TSJ; statistical analysis and interpretation of data: DDB, MLM, TSJ, YL; supervision or mentorship: KJR, TSJ, FJK, MLM. Each author contributed important intellectual content during manuscript drafting or revision and accepts accountability for the overall work by ensuring that questions pertaining to the accuracy or integrity of any portion of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Support: This work was funded by a National Institutes of Health (R34 DK102174) grant. The study was also supported by the Einstein-Montefiore CTSA grant numbers UL1RR025750, UL1TR001073, KL2RR025749, and TL1RR025748. Dr Brown was supported by T32DK007110.

Financial Disclosure: The authors declare that they have no relevant financial interests.

Acknowledgements: The Institute for Clinical and Translational Research and the Clinical Research Center of Einstein and Montefiore for sharing their resources; and Drs Vaughn Folkert and Michael Ross for their support.

Prior Presentation: The results presented in this paper were previously presented in abstract form at National Kidney Foundation Spring Clinical Meeting; April 10-14, 2018; Austin, TX.

Peer Review: Received August 28, 2019. Evaluated by 2 external peer reviewers, with direct editorial input from the Statistical Editor and the Editor-in-Chief. Accepted in revised form January 25, 2020.

REFERENCES

1. Inker LA, Schmid CH, Tighiouart H, et al. Estimating glomerular filtration rate from serum creatinine and cystatin C. N Engl J Med. 2012;367(1):20-29.
2. Coresh J, Wei GL, McQuillan G, et al. Prevalence of high blood pressure and elevated serum creatinine level in the United States: findings from the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (1988-1994). Arch Intern Med. 2001;161(9):1207-1216.
3. Wright JT Jr, Bakris G, Greene T, et al. Effect of blood pressure lowering and antihypertensive drug class on progression of hypertensive kidney disease: results from the AASK trial. JAMA. 2002;288(19):2421-2431.
4. Mitsnefes M, Ho PL, McEnery PT. Hypertension and progression of chronic renal insufficiency in children: a report of the North American Pediatric Renal Transplant Cooperative Study (NAPRTCS). J Am Soc Nephrol. 2003;14:2618-2622.
5. Mitsnefes M, Flynn J, Cohn S, et al. Masked hypertension associates with left ventricular hypertrophy in children with CKD. J Am Soc Nephrol. 2010;21(1):157-144.
6. Muntner P, Judd SE, McClellan WM, Saifford MM. Low medication adherence and hypertension control among adults with CKD: data from the REGARDS (Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke) Study. Am J Kidney Dis. 2010;56(3):447-457.
7. Schmitt KE, Edie CF, Laflam P, Simbartl LA, Thakar CV. Adherence to antihypertensive agents and blood pressure control in chronic kidney disease. Am J Nephrol. 2010;32(6):541-548.
8. Sabaté E. Adherence to Long-term Therapies: Evidence for Action. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2003.
9. Fraser SD, Roderick PJ, Casey M, Taal MW, Yuen HM, Nutbeam D. Prevalence and associations of limited health literacy in chronic kidney disease: a systematic review. Nephrol Dial Transplant. 2013;28(1):129-137.
10. Patzer RE, McClellan WM. Influence of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status on kidney disease. Nat Rev Nephrol. 2012;8(9):533-541.
11. Fisher JD, Fisher WA. Changing AIDS-risk behavior. Psychol Bull. 1992;111(3):455-474.
12. Fisher JD, Fisher WA, Misovich SJ, Kimble DL, Malloy TE. Changing AIDS risk behavior: effects of an intervention emphasizing AIDS risk reduction information, motivation, and behavioral skills in a college student population. Health Psychol. 1996;15(2):114-123.
13. Carey MP, Maisto SA, Kalichman SC, Forsyth AD, Wright EM, Johnson BT. Enhancing motivation to reduce the risk of HIV infection for economically disadvantaged urban women. J Consult Clin Psychol. 1997;65(4):531-541.
14. Bronson DL, Maxwell RA. Shared medical appointments: increasing patient access without increasing physician hours. Cleve Clin J Med. 2004;71(5):369-370. 372, 374 passim.

15. Plante WA, Lobato D, Engel R. Review of group interventions for pediatric chronic conditions. J Pediatr Psychol. 2001;26(7):435-453.

16. Deakin T, McShane CE, Cade JE, Williams RD. Group based training for self-management strategies in people with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2005;2:CD003417.

17. Carlson NS, Lowe NK. Centering Pregnancy: a new approach in prenatal care. MCN Am J Maternal Child Nurs. 2006;31(4):218-223.

18. Edelman D, Fredrickson SK, Melnyk SD, et al. Medical clinics versus usual care for patients with both diabetes and hypertension: a randomized trial. Ann Intern Med. 2010;152(11):689-696.

19. New York State Department of Health. Socio-Economic Status and General Health Indicators - Bronx County 2012-2014. https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/chai/docs/ses_58.htm. Accessed January 28, 2017.

20. Collins AJ, Foley R, Herzog C, et al. Excerpts from the United States Renal Data System 2007 annual data report. Am J Kidney Dis. 2008;51(1)(suppl 1):S1-S320.

21. Narva AS, Briggs M. The National Kidney Disease Education Program: improving understanding, detection, and management of CKD. Am J Kidney Dis. 2009;53(3)(suppl 3):S115-S120.

22. Wright Nunes J, Greene JH, Wallston K, et al. Pilot study of a physician-delivered education tool to increase patient knowledge about CKD. Am J Kidney Dis. 2013;62(1):23-32.

23. Levey AS, Stevens LA, Schmid CH, et al. A new equation to estimate glomerular filtration rate. Ann Intern Med. 2009;150(9):604-612.

24. Schwartz GJ, Work DF. Measurement and estimation of GFR in children and adolescents. Clin J Am Soc Nephrol. 2009;4(11):1832-1843.

25. Kalantar-Zadeh K, Kovesdy CP, Bross R, et al. Design and development of a dialysis food frequency questionnaire. J Ren Nutr. 2011;21(3):257-262.

26. Davis TC, Long SW, Jackson RH, et al. Rapid estimate of adult literacy in medicine: a shortened screening instrument. Fam Med. 1993;25(6):391-395.

27. Davis TC, Wolf MS, Arnold CL, et al. Development and validation of the Rapid Estimate of Adolescent Literacy in Medicine (REALM-Teen): a tool to screen adolescents for below-grade reading in health care settings. Pediatrics. 2006;118(6):e1707-e1714.

28. McCracken LM, Sato A, Wainwright D, House W, Taylor GJ. A feasibility study of brief group-based acceptance and commitment therapy for chronic pain in general practice: recruitment, attendance, and patient views. Prim Health Care Res Dev. 2014;15(3):312-323.

29. Artz N, Dixon S, Wylde V, et al. Comparison of group-based outpatient physiotherapy with usual care after total knee replacement: a feasibility study for a randomized controlled trial. Clin Rehabil. 2017;31(4):487-499.

30. Shi L, Lee DC, Haile GP, Liang H, Chung M, Sriprapatan A. Access to care and satisfaction among health center patients with chronic conditions. J Ambul Care Manag. 2017;40(1):69-76.

31. Flynn JT, Kaelber DC, Baker-Smith CM, et al. Clinical practice guideline for screening and management of high blood pressure in children and adolescents. Pediatrics. 2017;140(3):e20171904.

32. Akber A, Portale AA, Johansen KL. Use of pedometers to increase physical activity among children and adolescents with chronic kidney disease. Pediatr Nephrol. 2014;29(8):1395-1402.

33. Glynn LG, Murphy AW, Smith SM, Schroeder K, Fahey T. Interventions used to improve control of blood pressure in patients with hypertension. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2010;3:CD005182.

34. Stein MR, Soloway IJ, Jefferson KS, Roose RJ, Arnsten JH, Litwin AH. Concurrent group treatment for hepatitis C: implementation and outcomes in a methadone maintenance treatment program. J Subst Abuse Treat. 2012;43(4):424-432.

35. Jaber R, Braksmajer A, Trilling JS. Group visits: a qualitative review of current research. J Am Board Fam Med. 2006;19(3):276-290.

36. Bombard Y, Baker GR, Orlando E, et al. Engaging patients to improve quality of care: a systematic review. Implement Sci. 2018;13(1):98.

37. Appel LJ. ASH position paper: dietary approaches to lower blood pressure. J Am Soc Hypertens. 2009;3(5):321-331.

38. Mai A, Bloch A, Klaassen-Mielke R, Platen P, Hinrichs T. Diurnal profiles of pedometer-determined physical activity in chronically ill and mobility-limited older adults: a cross-sectional study. BMC Public Health. 2014;14:1268.

39. Panayre M, Kolko-Labadens A, Lasseur C, et al. Phenotypes influencing low physical activity in maintenance dialysis. J Ren Nutr. 2015;25(1):31-39.

40. Akber A, Portale AA, Johansen KL. Pedometer-assessed physical activity in children and young adults with CKD. Clin J Am Soc Nephrol. 2012;7(5):720-726.

41. Weibel AR, Okonsky J, Trompeta J, Holzemer WL. A systematic review of the effectiveness of peer-based interventions on health-related behaviors in adults. Am J Public Health. 2010;100(2):247-253.

42. Lamb SE, Bartlett HP, Ashley A, Bird W. Can lay-led walking programmes increase physical activity in middle aged adults? A randomised controlled trial. J Epidemiol Community Health. 2002;56(4):246-252.

43. Lorig KR, Ritter PL, Gonzalez VM. Hispanic chronic disease self-management: a randomized community-based outcome trial. Nurs Res. 2003;52(6):361-369.

44. Kichler JC, Kaugars AS, Marik P, Nabors L, Alemzadeh R. Effectiveness of groups for adolescents with type 1 diabetes mellitus and their parents. Fam Systems Health. 2013;31(3):280-293.

45. Arauz Boudreau AD, Kurowski DS, Gonzalez WI, Dimond MA, Orekovic NM. Latino families, primary care, and childhood obesity: a randomized controlled trial. Am J Prev Med. 2013;44(3)(suppl 3):S247-S257.

46. Hofsteenge GH, Wejs PJ, Delemarre-van der Waal HA, de Wit M, Chinpaw MJ. Effect of the Go4it multidisciplinary group treatment for obese adolescents on health related quality of life: a randomised controlled trial. BMC Public Health. 2013;13:939.