

## **Depression in dialysis patients in Africa: A narrative review**

Siyanda A Ngema, Tshiamo N Ramalepa

Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, City of Tshwane, South Africa

### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** The diagnosis of end-stage kidney disease affects the quality of life of dialysis patients, their families, and caregivers, potentially leading to depression. Dialysis patients experience depression due to multiple reasons, including the psychological effects of chronic illness, lifestyle constraints, and the physical difficulties of therapy. There's a scarcity of studies focusing on depression in dialysis patient populations in Africa.

**Aim:** In this review, we aimed to synthesise current evidence on depression among dialysis patients in Africa.

**Methods:** We extracted articles from multiple online databases, including African Journals Online, PubMed, EMBASE, and systematically searched to identify appropriate studies published between January 2014 and May 2024. We used descriptive and thematic analysis to analyse all studies using the PRISMA-Scar flow chart.

**Results:** Thirteen of the retrieved articles met the eligibility criteria. Four themes emerged across the 13 selected studies. First, the association of mental health and quality of life. Second, the treatment modality-related effects. Third, the psychosocial support. Fourth, the physical, cultural, and health effects. The limited number of peer-reviewed research papers identified raises concern, considering the rising prevalence of depression worldwide. More research is needed to improve the screening, diagnosis, and management of depression among dialysis patients in Africa.

**Conclusion:** Depression is prevalent in patients undergoing renal replacement therapies, namely haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. Regular depression assessments are crucial for patients with ESRD to ensure early diagnosis and optimum interventions. Healthcare practitioners, institutions, and policymakers should consider the themes addressed in this review to ensure appropriate measures are employed to protect the dialysis patient population from complications.

**Key Words:** Depression, Dialysis, Narrative Review, End-Stage-Renal-Disease