

**Sequential heart and kidney transplantation and priority.**

KAG has been approached regarding a patient who needs a heart transplant for a dilated cardiomyopathy and who has been on dialysis for 3 years with an underlying diagnosis of polycystic kidney disease. The referring team's cardiac surgeons are concerned not to do a simultaneous heart-kidney, to which she would be entitled, for fear that she may not come off the bypass pump in a stable haemodynamic condition sufficient to permit kidney transplantation. However, they are equally concerned that leaving her on immunosuppression on dialysis after heart transplantation would not be ideal. They have requested permission to list her for a heart and then, 3 months later (or whenever she is fit enough), to give her national priority for a kidney transplant.

It should be noted that a discussion between heart transplant surgeons at two other cardiac centres, one said they would not list for a simultaneous heart-kidney while the other stated their preference for simultaneous heart and kidney transplant.

KAG is asked to consider this circumstance in general, and this case in particular. She would be entitled to a simultaneous heart-kidney transplant, but in doing a staged procedure she should have better renal outcomes and there is also the possibility of avoiding a failed graft were she to die or be too unstable to support a kidney if transplanted simultaneously.

The issues here are:

1. A patient undergoing a heart and kidney simultaneously will get priority for a kidney ahead of patients on the national kidney transplant waiting list.
2. In a patient already established on dialysis, is it reasonable to give priority to a sequential kidney after a heart transplant?
3. In a patient assessed as needing a heart and kidney, but not yet on dialysis, is priority for a sequential kidney still appropriate either if they become dialysis dependent post heart transplant or if they are dialysis independent post heart transplant?
4. If priority is afforded, should we use the current mechanism of awarding 5 years' worth of waiting time points?

C. J. E. Watson