

Attitude development becomes challenge; dialysis no tragedy

By ROSE WEBER

Her face clearly reflected distress yet she sat perfectly still as two nurses inserted the necessary needle to begin kidney dialysis treatment.

Like the other patients at the Henry Ford Hospital hemodialysis unit in Troy, she knows she has no choice. According to Dr. Nathan Levin, head of both the main clinic in Detroit and the Troy satellite, patients will die within two weeks without dialysis.

"This is one of the challenges the staff works with here. We want to get the patients to accept dialysis as a fact of life and not a great tragedy and go from there," said Ms. Lois Bernbeck, head nurse for both the main and satellite clinics.

The patients at the clinic in Troy are in good health generally. Some have had kidneys surgically removed and others have kidneys which no longer are functioning.

The staff is succeeding in establishing a happy atmosphere for most of the patients. One gentleman on his way to get dressed after treatment said jokingly, "You know I only come here because you girls are so good looking."

But for some it is an uphill battle.

It is hard when they come three days a week. Five hours is a long time and they get bored with reading. It's great when they can get interested in a Rita Bell movie or the game shows," the head nurse said.

THE CLINIC is not operating at top capacity yet. And because it is considered an emergency situation, a nurse, doctor and technician are on call after clinic hours. "We take beepers home with us and if an emergency occurs, the

hospital can get help for the patient 24 hours a day," Ms. Fletcher said.

When a patient has to go on a trip or wants to take a vacation, he notifies the clinic first. Arrangements are made with other clinics around the country to admit him on a temporary basis.

One of the most unusual aspects of the clinic is the water consumption. Each patient uses more water in five minutes than you would ordinarily consume in two days.

THE WATER goes through four separate processes to remove particles and chemicals before it is mixed with chemicals needed by the patient.

The blood running through the cuprophane particles in the kidneys takes from the water the chemicals it needs and the water removes the body waste products.

Hepatitis is an ever present danger to both patients and staff. Each patient has his own set of artificial kidneys which are sterilized and kept in a formaldehyde solution between uses.

And items like pillows for armrests and covers for chairs are all disposable.

"FOR SOME reason the danger appears to be greater to staff than patients. So our staff undergoes tests each week to guard against trouble," Ms. Fletcher said.

But in spite of the serious business transacted in the clinic, the atmosphere is as bright as the splashes of blue and yellow decorating the room.

Jokes are shared, problems accepted good-naturedly and a friendly hello greets everyone who enters the room.

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THE PHILOSOPHY at the clinic is to encourage self-help by the patients. Nurse to patient ratio is lower than at the main clinic. Patients are encouraged to take their own temperatures and blood pressures and to learn as much preparation of the dialysis machine as possible.

Although nurses continually circulate through the unit, the patients monitor their machines and keep their own logs of the five-hour treatment process.

The staff includes five nurses and four technicians. Dr. Cosme Cruz is head doctor at the satellite; Ms. Carole Fletcher, head nurse; and Charlie Gooden, technician leader.

THE CLINIC, in operation since September, 1973, has 28 patients including one who is being trained in the home care unit.

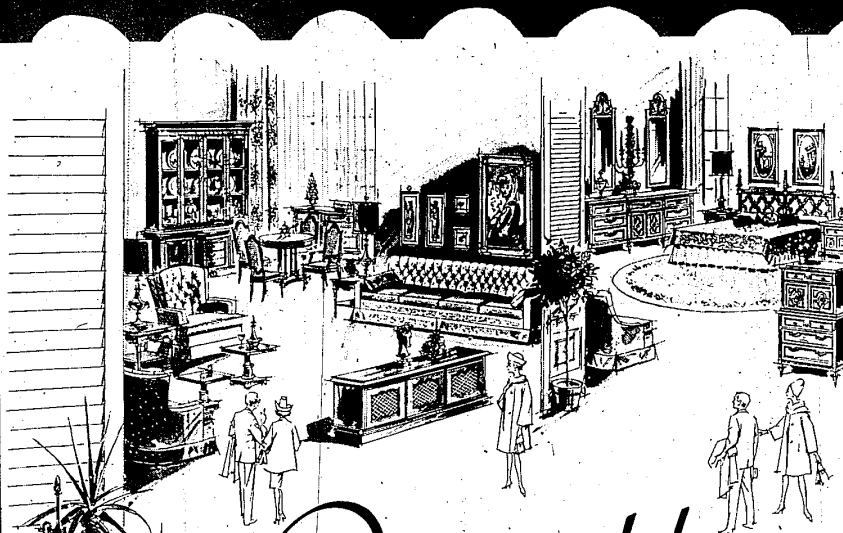
In addition to the colorfully decorated main room there are two home training rooms.

"We want to train as many patients as we can how to use the machine at home. The government pays for the machines and there is no limit on how many we can place," said Ms. Fletcher.

Because a good mental outlook is so important, patients are encouraged to entertain themselves and each other during the treatment.

THE CHAIRS can be turned so patients can play checkers or other games together. Color television sets with remote controls are suspended from the ceiling.

"We are looking for individual head sets for the televisions now. It's not so bad when they all have the same program but it's bedlam when they don't," Ms. Fletcher said.



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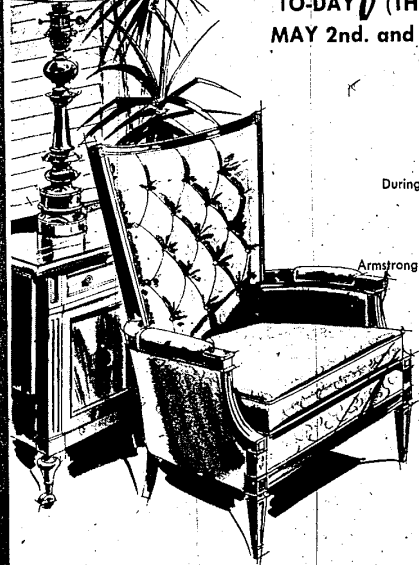
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Club elects new officers

Wallace G. Wheeler of Birmingham has been re-elected president of Pine Lake Country Club, Orchard Lake, for the 1974-75 season.

Other officers are Archie M. Long of Bloomfield Hills, re-elected vice president; Terrence E. Sweeney of Birmingham, re-elected secretary and Richard G. McEndarffer of Orchard Lake, elected treasurer.

Elected directors for three-year terms were Wheeler, McEndarffer and John R. Bull of Bloomfield Hills. Wheeler and Bull were re-elected.

Carry-over board members are Lee Biske Jr., of Birmingham, Robert Breest of Birmingham, Gilbert K. Hause of Bloomfield Hills and Andrew W. Seed of Birmingham.

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