Title: VASCULAR ACCESS DEVICE CARE: PRACTICES THAT WILL SAVE LIVES, TIME & MONEY
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Introduction: Vascular Access Device (VAD) complications and failure has a multifocal impact on the patient, family and healthcare system. It may require another painful and resource-intensive insertion procedure for a new VAD and can cause significant patient suffering, prolonged hospitalisation, and increase both healthcare costs and mortality. Interruption to prescribed treatment, including time-sensitive regimens of antibiotics, inotropic support and anti-cancer therapies can also result from VAD failure. Objectives: The aim was to synthesise knowledge about vascular access practices from the findings of primary studies to recommend to clinicians and policy makers steps to reduce VAD failure and complications. Methods: We used the case of a hospital with 450 acute care beds and demonstrated the impact if five practices with an evidence-base from the literature were actioned by clinicians in terms of lives, time and money. Results: Incorporating strategies in five VAD practices to reduce failure can result in major savings in health-care costs and improve patients' satisfaction and experience. Conclusion: A consistent finding from the literature is that the transfer of research findings into clinical practice and policy can be problematic and slow. It has been argued that a good proportion of the care provided to patients is not in accordance with the evidence and in fact possibly harmful. Our review, identified, five simple evidence-based practices, which if consistently applied by clinicians, would save lives, time and money.