Burden of Imaging Renal Cysts

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Background

- Renal cysts are a common incidental finding on cross-sectional radiographic imaging.
- While most cysts are benign, individuals are frequently monitored for growth and malignant transformation.
- To date, no US based organization provides guidelines to guide the follow-up of patients with incidental cysts. This lack of guidance creates a potential for variability in practice leading to unnecessary testing, patient anxiety, radiation exposure, and waste of health care resources.

Hypothesis

There is an unclear appreciation of the low risk of malignant transformation in the case of most renal cysts, the failure on part of providers to appreciate and discuss a threshold of acceptable risk, and lastly the lack of Decision-making tools that allow providers and patients to reach a decision about whether follow-up imaging is appropriate or not given a patient's individual circumstances, values and preferences.

Aims

- Evaluate patients’ values and preferences with regards to renal cysts and their follow-up
- Assess the feasibility of surveying providers who manage patients with renal cysts
- Describe the intensity and modality of follow-up imaging of patients and characterize practice patterns among different providers

Goals

- Deploy a survey of a random sample of 200 patients to assess values and preferences regarding renal cysts and their follow-up
- Identify providers who will be the target population to deploy a healthcare provider’s survey at a later stage
- Determine the prevalence of renal cysts by utilizing the GPC dataset

Challenges

- Obtaining a high survey response rate
- Correctly identifying people who have been diagnosed with a renal cyst especially if they have not been informed of their diagnosis
- Pioneering the IRB reciprocal agreement through the GPC
- Identifying other providers to partner with within the GPC