

# Silver Award Project Utility

Facility: DVA--St. Peters Dialysis  
Silver Award User: Jean Conner

Project Status:

## 1. Description of Project:

We were inspired by brochures sent by Heartland Kidney Network which described coloring with pencils as a way to feel calm. The brochure touted research which indicated that coloring could help with depression, feel less stressed, and help with mood and depression. Project involved providing patients with coloring books and pencils to color either at home or during dialysis (or both) to help patients feel more calm.

## 2. Outcomes Measured:

Patients were provided surveys and asked to return with no names identifying the patients. The survey had statements and then the patients were to circle the response that most reflected their viewpoint. The options were Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

The patients were asked to evaluate the following:  
Whether coloring was perceived as an enjoyable activity.

Whether Time was spent at home coloring as well as at dialysis.  
Whether coloring helped patients to feel calm.  
Whether coloring helped relieve stress and anxiety  
Whether patients plan to continue coloring even after project ended.  
Recommend project to other facilities.

## 3. Summary of Outcomes/Results:

All patients who completed the survey said the activity was enjoyable except 1 patient who was 'neutral'.  
All patients except 3 colored at home in addition to coloring during dialysis.  
7 patients stated strongly agreed that coloring helped them to feel calm. 3 patients stated agreed.  
6 patients indicated that they strongly agreed that coloring helped to relieve stress and anxiety. 4 patients agreed.  
7 people stated that they were planning to continue coloring even though the project has ended. 3 people were undecided whether they would continue coloring.  
All 10 respondents stated that they would recommend the project to other facilities

## 4. Impact on Patients:

The project was a huge success and we thank you so much for the grant. It made a bigger impact on the patients than we could have hoped for. We anticipated that men might be more inclined to not enjoy and not participate. We anticipated that many patients would perceive coloring as 'childish' and not beneficial to mental health. In actuality, men were our strongest participants for coloring. They participated at higher rates and stated enjoying the activity and stated good mental health impact. One man had advanced Parkinson's as well as depression and he colored consistently. The coloring actually seemed to help his tremors and make him feel more confident which seemed to help his depression. Another man framed and hung his pictures at home. He colored a lot at home (as well as during dialysis) and family and friends are now buying him additional supplies. Another woman started coloring at home 'all the time' and family and friends identified that she now had a new hobby and are also buying her new coloring books and pencils. She smiles often now and talks about how her friends and family are complementary of her efforts. It appeared to help people deal with depression by helping people with loneliness. It gives them something to do with a purpose and appears to help with self esteem and mood.

## 5. Lessons Learned:

I would totally recommend this project to other facilities. Several of the staff members who felt that coloring was 'childish' and anticipated that the project was not going to go over well with the patients are now our biggest supporters. One of the staff members (initially negative) said it was the best thing we ever did for the patients. Thank you so much for proving the money for us to purchase the supplies.

tips:

Look at research put out by different agencies to identify ways to improve mental health.

Don't stereotype activities as gender related.

We were so glad that we had ordered the more expensive adult looking coloring books that had hard backs on them. They made coloring during dialysis much easier.

Sell the project before beginning it with the patients by citing the research that shows that coloring is an enjoyable activity for all genders. Describing coloring as the new cool activity for all age groups is helpful.

Some patients were coloring all the time and went through the coloring books quickly. We thought 40 or so pages in a coloring book was plenty, but some patients were going home and bringing back completed coloring books in a couple of weeks.