Introduction

After the US and Canada, Europe entered the process of Best Practice Guidelines in end-stage renal diseases under the leadership of the European Renal Association–European Dialysis and Transplantation Association.

The first guidelines devoted to the management of anaemia were published in this Journal in 1999 (14: Suppl. 5). In 2000, a second group of guidelines was published on renal transplantation (15: Suppl. 7). The European Best Practice Guidelines for haemodialysis adequacy presented here were developed by the European working party (see list of members on page 110 of this Supplement).

It was decided to publish first a set of texts covering the following fields: starting dialysis, adequacy of dialysis, biocompatibility, quality of dialysis fluids, preventing of clotting, infection, and cardiovascular diseases. A second set of texts, covering intradialytic and interdialytic haemodynamics, dialysis-related bone disease, nutrition, and vascular access is to be published in a second wave.

In some of these areas, similar guidelines have already been developed in the US National Kidney Foundation–Dialysis Outcomes Quality Initiative (NKF–DOQI). As these guidelines were designed around haemodialysis practice in the US, it was felt that a specific document for use in European countries was mandatory.

These guidelines are directly designed for the European nephrology community. It is our sincere hope they will be useful in improving patient care.

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On behalf of the EBPG Working Group