

# UW Health: Nephrology nurses play a critical role during pandemic

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MADISON, Wis. –UW Health is devoting this week to honoring some of the unsung healthcare heroes who are essential to our COVID-19 response. Today we are recognizing the important work of nephrology nurses.

Nephrology nurses care for patients who are experiencing, or are at risk for, kidney disease. Nephrology nursing involves both preventing disease and assessing the health needs of patients and families. Care spans the life cycle and involves patients who are experiencing the real or threatened impact of acute or chronic kidney disease.

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, has led to an increase in patients who have experienced acute kidney injury, affecting approximately 20–40% of all patients that are admitted to intensive care with COVID-19. One of the therapies used to support these critically ill patients is called continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT), which filters and cleans the blood when kidneys are damaged or not functioning normally. Early recognition of kidney involvement in COVID-19 and use of preventive and therapeutic measures to limit subsequent acute kidney injury or progression to more severe stages are crucial to reducing morbidity and mortality.

UW Health nephrology nurses have not only played a critical role in treating and supporting COVID-19 patients, but they are doing so during some of the most critical times of those patients' illnesses.