

Prüfe J - Hannover

Title: little babies and big problems – on the psychosocial needs of infants undergoing dialysis and transplantation

In 2013, Cathy (name changed) was the youngest and smallest child ever to receive a kidney transplant in Germany. Likely, she was the smallest and youngest all across Europe being an infant of 3.5 months of age and weighing about 4.5 kg.

She spent her first 6 months of life in hospital and her case was a true challenge: medically, ethically, psychologically and even socially. Still it was only a couple of weeks later a young boy of equal age and weight underwent kidney transplantation in our unit at Hannover Medical School.

I would like to take these examples to point out the special psychosocial needs, developmental risks and exceptional demands which go with treating such young children, especially when they are hospitalised for a long time. Furthermore, I would like to show where we stand today – roughly 1.5 years later and discuss our experiences.