

Questions for Kent Thiry

- 1) The U.S.A has had the highest kidney dialysis mortality rate in the industrialized world! It looks to us DaVita was a large part of it. Can you explain why this is?
- 2) A poorer country, Italy, has a lower kidney dialysis mortality rate than the U.S. (10% vs our closer to 20%) and spends one third less. Can you explain this?
- 3) A non-profit in the U.S., DCI, appears to have a much lower kidney dialysis mortality rate than both the large for-profits: DaVita and Fresenius. Can you explain why this is?
- 4) Why do some call our dialysis treatments here short and violent?
- 5) DaVita serves a large portion of the minority population. We recall the Afro-American dialysis population has a lower mortality rate than the Caucasian dialysis population. Shouldn't this cause DaVita's mortality rate to be better than DCI's? Why the discrepancy?
- 6) When DaVita recently settled a \$55 million Judgment for misusing the drug epogen, DaVita stated it was the physicians prescribing the drug. Why did for-profit physicians, like DaVita's, find it necessary to prescribe sometimes **three times** what the non-profit physicians were prescribing? (Epogen in high doses has been linked to increased risk for death, strokes, and heart attacks in kidney dialysis patients)
- 7) What are DaVita's best practices and what are they like at DCI and other countries?
- 8) Why does DaVita strive for a high patient/staff ratio when the state of Vermont and many say a ratio of 9 patients to 3 techs and one nurse would avoid problems when things go wrong?
- 9) Why does DaVita continue the dangerous practice of reuse when there are so many studies saying this is a dangerous practice? There are counter-studies (unreliable?), but the bottom line seems to be people like Betty Allen might be alive today if the practice of reuse was abandoned.
- 10) We would like to know why patients come into dialysis with kidney disease, yet so many pass away with heart disease?
- 11) From '91 to '01 the USRDS shows the number of patients doubling, costs tripled, yet the death rate was up 123%. We were wondering where the money went? - looks like it didn't go to patient care!
- 12) And are large, rich, for-profit dialysis companies such as DaVita and Fresenius still rationing gauze? Isn't that like rationing bullets in a war?