Sir William Roberts (18 March 1830 - 16 April 1899)

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS: The first successful hemodialysis in the World was performed in 1944 by Wilhelm Kolff, and the first patient with acute kidney injury was saved by him using hemodialysis in 1945. The first dialysis ward was opened by Nils Alwall in 1950.

RESULTS: Until late 50’s of the last century in Poland dialysis was not performed at all. The nearest possibility was in Prague, Czech Republic and some patients were transported there. In fact, the first dialysis machine was gifted by W. Kolff himself to the Urology Department of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow in 1946. Unfortunately, this was never used because of some organizational troubles. Thanks to common action of Prof. Andrzej Bieracki from Health Ministry, Prof. Tadeusz Orlowski from Warsaw Medical University and Prof. Jan Roguski from Poznan Medical University, in 1958 Poland obtained two Alwall’s hemodialysis machines to Warsaw and Poznan. Nils Alwall’s conception machines, were the most popular in this time in Europe. Both Universities started preparation to be ready for the first treatment. Fortunately for Prof. Roguski, Poznan center was ready at the end of 1958. The first session in Poland was carried November 6th, 1958 in 22 years old male patient. The team consist of Prof. Jan Roguski, dr. Janina Nowaczyk, dr. Kazimierz Baczyk and a nurse Felicja Matysiak. Meanwhile in Warsaw the tentative dialysis in dog was performed at the end of the year 1958, and first curative treatment in human being was performed in 1959. Interestingly in official sources for many years priority of Warsaw was noticed, corrected by Prof. Orlowski few years after.

CONCLUSIONS: Nowadays in Poland almost 30 000 patients are treated with different form of renal replacement therapy and fortunately everyone who needs dialysis have this without any limitation.