

Supportive and palliative care research and audit conference

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Oral and poster abstract submission template

Abstracts should be submitted to samantha.wilkinson@srft.nhs.uk by 5pm on Friday 30 September 2016.

Title: Cancer-related information needs and decision making preferences in people with dementia who have cancer, their carers and cancer clinicians

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Abstract

Background: Little is known about the cancer experience and support needs of people with dementia. Evidence suggests that compared to having cancer without a co-morbid diagnosis of dementia, those with dementia are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage of disease with poorer clinical outcomes. The aim of this study is to explore the information needs and decision-making preferences of cancer patients who have a diagnosis of dementia, their carers and cancer clinicians.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews are being conducted with patient/carer dyads (n=10) and cancer clinicians (n=10) recruited from a cancer hospital. Patients with any cancer type and dementia severity are eligible to take part. Interviews are audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to be used in thematic analysis.

Results: To date, 20 participants have taken part (7 patients aged 39-93 years, 6 carers, 7 clinicians). Dementia type includes Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Pick's disease and HIV-related dementia, with dementia severity recorded as: mild=2; moderate=2; severe=3. Cancer type includes: skin, urological, head & neck, gynaecological and colorectal. Emerging findings reveal that: carers provide significant support in treatment decision-making processes; understanding the potential impact of cancer treatment on dementia is an important factor; and clinicians would welcome additional dementia-specific training.

Implications: The emerging findings suggest that patients with dementia require specific support in making cancer-treatment decisions. This has implications for clinician education and service development. The findings from the study will inform the development of an information and decision-making guide, which will be tested in future research.