

Poster abstract

The development, implementation and evaluation of an outpatient palliative radiotherapy programme

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Abstract

Purpose: Improve the quality of integrated care and support to oncology outpatients receiving palliative radiotherapy.

Theory/background: Oncology patients receiving palliative radiotherapy experience major transitions. These patients are currently offered shortened outpatient treatment. In 2004–2005, research by RU students showed deficiencies in information, continuity in care, and in communication between health care providers. To improve integrated care and transmutal cooperation multidisciplinary teams contributed to developing a protocol and checklist called 'Transmutal Programme Palliative Radiotherapy' (TZPR).

Method: The RU Centre of Expertise Transitions in Care evaluated the process of regional implementation and the value of TZPR on patient and organizational level. Themes were needs, logistic process, symptom control, psychosocial support and after-care. A mixed methods design was used: semi-structured interviews with 20 caregivers and patients; a focus group discussion with 7 caregivers; a questionnaire for both patients and control group.

Results/conclusion: Health professionals are positive about the content and implementation of TZPR. They experienced an improvement in the quality of integrated care and support to patients. Preliminary results from the patients' perspective are expected mid-2009. The participatory approach guarantees the desired integrated care.

Keywords

palliative care, radiotherapy, oncology patients, quality of care
