Developing a novel approach to follow up for patients with prostate cancer

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Introduction / Objectives

Cancer survivors now account for approximately 22.4 million people globally. Debate around the need, effectiveness and efficiency of traditional models of follow-up care is ongoing. The objectives of this programme were to establish a novel shared care model of follow up involving primary and secondary care practitioners: to address quality of life; adequate monitoring for cancer recurrence; and reinforcement of the primary care teams roles.

Materials and Methods

The prostate cancer service at Guy’s and St Thomas’ Foundation Trust along with stakeholders in Primary Care and patient representatives devised a Survivorship Programme as an alternative to traditional follow up. This was to be delivered through a treatment specific survivorship patient day consisting of a number of presentations to a group of patients who had undergone a specific treatment for prostate cancer. Topics included dietary advice, incontinence and erectile dysfunction. Evaluation of the programme was carried out through pre and post programme surveys.

Results

Pre programme surveys suggested 46 (78%) patients were confident they knew what to expect from the day before attending, 11 (19%) came merely out of curiosity about the new programme and 26 (44%) attended because they liked the idea of addressing more than one problem at a single visit.

Analysis of the post programme survey revealed little difference in responses across the three groups. When questioned whether the programme was better or no different to a traditional follow up appointment, 18 (82%), 15 (83%) and 18 (95%) of the robotic radical retro pubic prostatectomy, EBRT and HT groups respectively agreed the day was better.

Conclusion

An integrated primary and secondary care follow up programme delivering a patient focussed survivorship programme has the potential to dramatically improve the patients’ experience and may prove to be an innovative and cost effective way of delivering safe, high quality care.