



Educating health professionals about sexual dysfunction improves the experience of men on hormone treatment for prostate cancer

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Introduction / Objectives

Advances in prostate cancer management over the last 10 years have meant men with advanced disease are living longer with the consequences of treatment. This project sought to develop and evaluate a short educational course to improve the knowledge and comfort levels of professionals working in both primary and secondary care when addressing sexual dysfunction in men on hormone treatment for prostate cancer.

Materials and Methods

The current practice of 50 GP's, 50 Oncologists and 50 Nurse Specialists was initially evaluated defining educational backgrounds, attitudes, challenges, perceptions and confidence in respect to managing sexual dysfunction in hormone patients. 10 professionals from each group were subsequently invited to attend a short educational workshop, consisting of knowledge to support assessment and management and an opportunity for role play. Participants then completed questionnaires immediately following the course and again one year later.

Results

Immediately following the workshop two-thirds 22 (73%) of the participants thought the workshop would help them in their future communication regarding sexual dysfunction, with 21 (70%) reporting the workshop had helped them 'a great deal' in feeling more comfortable in addressing sexual dysfunction management. This was confirmed at one year with 20 (67%) respondents feeling comfortable in dealing with sexual dysfunction and 22 (73%) recognising they 'more often' or 'consistently' included sexual dysfunction assessment during the follow up of men on hormone treatment.

Conclusion

It is feasible to develop a short workshop directed at enhancing the sexual dysfunction management skills of healthcare professionals in both primary and secondary care with respect to men on long-term hormones for prostate cancer

