Factors influencing people’s ability to maintain their activity levels during chemotherapy for soft tissue sarcoma - a qualitative study

Sarah Dewhurst
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sarah.dewhurst@rmh.nhs.uk
Background

- Minimal research into rehabilitation & soft tissue sarcoma
- Being active benefits people with advanced cancer
- Typically people with cancer become more sedentary
- Many barriers to remaining active exist
- Support is limited, inconsistent & often too cautious

Purpose

“To find out how people with a soft tissue sarcoma feel their physical activity levels are affected during chemotherapy treatment”
Method:

- Exploratory, qualitative study
- Six semi-structured interviews
- Ethical approval received (11/NW/0739)
- Participants interviewed during chemotherapy 2/6
- Inductive thematic analysis completed

Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
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<td>1. Physical activity as an indicator of normality</td>
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<td>2. The implications, loss and uncertainty for the future because of the diagnosis and treatment</td>
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<td>3. The challenge of recognising support needs as physical activity declines</td>
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Conclusions...So What?

- It’s physical activity that counts not exercise
- What people gain from activity is different for everyone
- People are motivated by maintaining their role in life, feeling ‘normal’ & having control

Implications ... So What Now?

- Anticipate physical decline and impact of fatigue
- Inform about benefits of remaining active
- Personalise questions about physical activity
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Please get in touch via: sarah.dewhurst@rmh.nhs.uk

References
