University of BRISTOL

University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

headandneck 5000

Appearance-related distress amongst head and neck cancer patients during the first year post-diagnosis.

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Scientific Outline

Summary

Treatment for head and neck cancer can result in sizeable and visible changes to appearance, with potential for a significant impact on body image. However, not all patients report negative psychosocial outcomes as a consequence of these changes. To date, research into the impact of head and neck cancer on body image and appearance-related concerns has been limited to small qualitative studies and retrospective cross-sectional quantitative surveys using an array of body image measures. There is still a dearth of large scale studies that prospectively assess body image and appearance-related concerns from the point of diagnosis onwards.

The Head & Neck 5000 data offers a unique opportunity to examine these issues from the point of diagnosis and over the subsequent year. Participants recruited from the Bristol site have been asked to complete additional standardised widely used measures of body image and appearance-related distress at 4 and 12 month follow up data collection points. Detailed analysis of this data from the Bristol participants (and data from other measures completed by participants at all sites) will offer a new awareness of the impact of changes to appearance after diagnosis of head and neck cancer over the first year after diagnosis, which will inform further research, and provision of care and information for future patients.

Keywords: head and neck cancer; appearance; body image