University of BRISTOL

NHS University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

headandneck 5000

Pain, fatigue and functional outcomes

Principal Applicant: Dr Joanne Patterson

Co-Applicants: Professor Linda Sharp, Dr Liya Lui, Dr Sam Harding, Ms Laura-Jayne Watson

Summary:

Head and neck cancer (HNC) and its treatment has a high symptom burden including pain and fatigue, speech and swallowing difficulties. Although some symptoms may improve in the months after treatment, others persist longer term and can have a profound impact on survivors' lives. Preliminary evidence suggests that up to a third of HNC survivors live with chronic pain. Fatigue is a common long-term side-effect of cancer treatment, although studies have rarely included HNC survivors. The impact of pain and fatigue on speech and swallowing function and well-being has not been explored. Understanding whether there is a relationship has implications for interventions and rehabilitation.

The aim of this project is to investigate

1) The prevalence, trajectory and predictors of patient-reported pain up to three years following HNC treatment, and how this varies for different subgroups of patients.

2) The prevalence, trajectory and predictors of patient-reported fatigue up to three years following HNC treatment, and how this varies for different subgroups of patients.

2) The relationship of pain and fatigue to functions (communication and swallowing) social contact, mood/psychological wellbeing and mood.

Data relevant to pain, fatigue, speech, swallowing and social contact will be extracted from the EORTC QLQ-H&N35 at baseline and at all follow-up points to date, using all patients in the HN5000 dataset. Analysis will include a comparison of clinically important pain and fatigue over time, predictors of symptoms, associations with potential explanatory variables and identification of a pain-fatigue-depression symptom cluster

Key words: Head and neck cancer; pain; fatigue; speech; swallowing; social; mood; quality of life