

Individual Research Project Presentations Day 10th June 2024, Kent and Medway Medical School.

Supporting patients to maximise well-being after treatment for primary breast cancer in Kent and Medway: a service evaluation.

Student^a: Neha Rayani | **Supervisor(s)^b:** Miss Karina Cox

Abstract

Background: Research shows there is a negative impact on mental well-being in primary breast cancer patients following treatment. Impact of cancer treatments on mental well-being is not fully understood and it is important to know what matters to these patients and how to support them. Services are provided by the NHS to support patients mentally and physically; which leads on to the following research question: How can services be improved to maximise mental well-being to support patients after treatment for primary breast cancer in Kent and Medway through a service evaluation?

Methods: Qualitative data was collected as an interview study was undertaken in a single NHS Trust to evaluate services. Ethical approval was obtained using the KMMS REAG checklist. Five individual interviews were conducted with 2 clinical staff members, 1 breast cancer charity trustee and 2 patient representatives to best understand how mental well-being has been negatively impacted and what can be done to improve this for future patients. Interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed.

Results: Three themes emerged from the interview data: resilience and strength, feeling safe and supported, and feeling well and healthy. These themes were shown to be involved in improving mental well-being in primary breast cancer patients. Furthermore, a toolkit was identified which is a package involving the basis of the thematic analysis. Key components of the toolkit included shorter waiting times for results, counselling sessions and physical activity guidance.

Conclusions: Mental well-being in future primary breast cancer patients can be maximised by using a toolkit as part of their care plan. This toolkit will equip them in better ways to cope as well as ensure they feel resilient and strong, safe and supported, and well and healthy. Further research collecting more data through interviews will allow the formation of a more robust toolkit.

Keywords: Well-being | Breast Cancer | Quality of Life | Patients

^a 4th Year Medical Student, Kent and Medway Medical School, Canterbury, United Kingdom

^b Consultant Breast and Oncoplastic Surgeon, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, Kent, United Kingdom

Main contact email: n.rayani4@kmms.ac.uk