A first step in shared decision making. Developing a decision aid for the choice of anal cancer radiotherapy

Olling, Karina; Wee, Leonard; Jensen, Lars Henrik; Dahl Steffensen, Karina

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A FIRST STEP IN SHARED DECISION MAKING
DEVELOPING A DECISION AID
FOR THE CHOICE OF ANAL CANCER RADIOTHERAPY

INTRODUCTION

In shared decision making (SDM), clinicians and patients participate in an open discussion about the possible treatment options. SDM is an important step in ensuring that patients receive the care they want.

AIM

In curative anal cancer radiotherapy there is a possible trade-off between the risks and benefits of a higher or lower radiation dose. For our first pilot trial, the consensus was to design a simple qualitative decision aid.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

We reviewed relevant literature about SDM with additional focus on patient and radiotherapy nurse perspectives. Literature was held with similar tools for SDM in oncological care contexts.

RESULTS

The study aimed to identify the use of SDM in oncological care contexts. The aim was to improve the evidence base for the use of SDM in oncological care contexts.

CONCLUSION

Significant clinical learning outcomes were seen in the decision aid, complexity of decision aids and awareness of the process of involving patients in their radiotherapy treatment.

We observed a majority of patients did not talk about SDM in the radiotherapy treatment. Patients were asked to take part in the development of the decision aid and patient feedback was essential for refining the decision aid and educating clinical staff.

DECISION AID

RADIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT, VEJLE HOSPITAL

You’ve now had a conversation with your doctor about the radiotherapy treatment. We can offer you two options: lower or higher dose.

How many times should I have follow-up consultations? You will be treated in 28 sessions, 5 days a week.

Will my chemotherapy be affected by my choice? Your chemotherapy will not be affected by your choice.

What is my risk of acute side effects? You have the same risk with either option. Acute side effects are generally durable, reversible and pass around 6 months.

What are the long term side effects? Chronic fatigue and bone marrow suppression can be expected. Most symptoms fade within 6 months.

What is my risk of late or severe side effects? The long term side effects are generally higher for a higher radiation dose. The risk of long term side effects is generally higher for a higher radiation dose.

What are my risks of metastases? You have the same risk with either option. Acute side effects are generally reversible, are generally low in cancer patients.

What are my risks of side effects? You will receive the same treatment with either option. Acute side effects are generally reversible, are generally low in cancer patients.

REFERENCES: The trial of the radiotherapy decision aid was conducted at the Radiumhospitalet in Copenhagen.

DECISION AID

RADIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT, VEJLE HOSPITAL

HIGHER RADIATION DOSE

I want to increase my chance of the tumor completely disappear. At the same time, I am increasing my risk of side effects, which might affect my quality of life.

LOWER RADIATION DOSE

I want to decrease my risk of side effects, and possibly increase my quality of life.

PLEASE NOTE: For any choice, it is not certain that your tumor will completely disappear or that you will experience fewer side effects.

MRS. SOERENSEN CHOOSES THE LOWER RADIATION DOSE

Mrs. Soerensen is 73 years old and has been diagnosed with anal cancer.

She is recommended for radiotherapy treatment, and has been discussing risks and benefits with the doctors and the nurses in the department.

She has also been discussing the radiotherapy treatment with her family.

A couple of years ago, Mrs. Soerensen retired and she is enjoying her life with her wife. She has been a big family with lots of grandchildren, and the time she spends with them means a lot to her. She enjoys being a grandmother and has been busy with her family.

For many years, Mr. Hansen and his wife have been active sexually. Therefore he is not concerned of the risk of erectile dysfunction after the radiotherapy treatment.

DECISION AID

CONTACT:
E-mail: Karina.Olling@hja.dk
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