

Macmillan Survivorship Research Group Research programme 2009 to 2014

Around 2 million people are living with or beyond cancer in the UK and this figure is rising by more than 3% per year (Macmillan, 2008). Whilst increasing survival rates are to be celebrated, the experiences and needs of those who have completed their primary cancer treatment are relatively neglected (DH, 2007). How to best assess problems faced or which interventions are effective in helping relieve or prevent problems following primary treatment are largely unknown (Corner, 2008). With rising numbers of survivors the need to understand problems faced following treatment, how they are resolved, and how to support self management is becoming increasingly important for people affected by cancer, service planners and health policy makers. Our research programme focuses on:

Understanding recovery and self management following primary treatment

Cohort study of 1000 colorectal cancer survivors to explore recovery of health and well-being following primary treatment. Assessments at five time points over 2 years.

Online survey to assess survivors confidence to self manage cancer/treatment related problems following primary treatment, including barriers and supports to self management.

Co-creating and testing interventions to support self management

Development and testing of an online intervention to support self management of cancer related fatigue following primary treatment to establish whether an online resource can enhance confidence to self manage cancer related fatigue following primary treatment.

Outcomes

Our research programme will get to the heart of survivors' experiences following primary treatment and identify, develop and test solutions to support self management of cancer related problems. We will gain better understanding of the recovery process following treatment, identify who is most likely to experience problems and when, and factors associated with resolution of problems. Self management support can increase quality of life and confidence in managing problems associated with cancer (Lev et al., 2001); we will identify who is most likely to need self management support following primary treatment and develop and test supportive interventions to enhance self management.

User involvement and including those typically under-represented.

We continue to broaden involvement and integrate people affected by cancer in all of our research activities.

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