

Feasibility of Using Patient Reported Outcome Measures in Non-Melanoma Skin Cancers

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The incidence of skin cancers is exponentially increasing yet few studies have evaluated patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs). We aimed to establish the feasibility of using the Skin Cancer Quality of Life Impact Tool (SCQOLIT) in non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC), and its impact on consultations.

Methods

Individuals referred to secondary care Dermatology services with clinically suspected NMSC were invited to participate in this prospective feasibility study. Patients with histologically proven 'low risk' NMSC were allocated to Group 1 and 'high-risk' NMSC to Group 2 according to British Association of Dermatology Guidelines for NMSC management. The SCQOLIT is a ten-item skin cancer-specific PROM. Items are scored on 4-point Likert scale (range 0-3) with higher scores indicating poorer quality of life. Group 1 received SCQOLIT questionnaires by post; Group 2 completed questionnaires in clinic, at baseline and 3 months. Interim data were analysed between Jul-15 and Jan-16 (n=83).

Results

Participation rates at baseline were 96% (64/67) for Group 1 and 100% for group 2 (n=16). Group 1: mean age 77.5 y/o, 42M:24F, presented with 91 NMSC (91% BCC); Group 2: mean age 78.6 y/o, 12M:4F, presented with 18 'high risk' SCC. Median baseline SCQOLIT scores (total score 30) for Groups 1 and 2 were 4 (range 0-20) and 5 (range 0-19), respectively. Median SCQOLIT score at 3 months were 2 (range 0-13) and 3 (range 0-9) for Groups 1 and 2, respectively. The highest scoring question was regarding sun protection and sun avoidance with 20% reporting 'very worried'.

Conclusions

The SCQOLIT tool is acceptable to patients attending Dermatology outpatient clinics. Total SCQOLIT scores were low and only one patient reached threshold score of 20, suggested by developers of SCQOLIT as significant of high burden. Findings from this study suggest that specific items are weighted according to their importance to patients. Individual high scoring items provide greatest value guiding the consultation to ensure patient anxieties are adequately addressed. Unmet needs have been identified in a small subset and will be further evaluated through structured interviews. Exploring the impact of using PROMs with patients with NMSC will potentially inform future clinical and/or service planning decisions.