Utilizing Patient-Reported Outcome Questionnaires in Standard Practice: A Study from Thoracic Radiation Oncology

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Background/Purpose

- Patient-reported outcome (PRO) questionnaires are one approach to improve patient-provider communication, enhance satisfaction, and increase survival.¹,²
- However, there is limited research on its effectiveness in radiation oncology, and many providers are hesitant to implement PROs due to possible disturbance of clinical flow or lack of utility.³⁻⁵
- So, we examined provider and patient sentiments towards PRO questionnaires as part of routine clinical care.

Methods

- Patients and providers were given a questionnaire to elicit their viewpoints on PRO utilization in the thoracic radiation oncology (TRO) department before and after PRO implementation.
- The provider questionnaire included questions about the benefits and downsides of PRO implementation.
- The patient questionnaire included questions about care management, communication, decision-making, and comfort level.
- We used summary statistics to compare patient and provider surveys before and after PRO implementation.

Results

| Participant | All Participants (N=173) | Pre-Survey | Post-Survey | CTCAE Questionnaire | CTCAE Questionnaire - Unexpected
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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>50%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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Table 1 Demographics

Pre- vs. post-providers:

- Prior to PRO implementation, providers were optimistic that PROs could improve clinical flow. However, most developed a neutral stance following implementation, suggesting an opportunity for improvement.
- Providers emphasized that they wanted PROs for data visualization and creation of a high-alert-value system; thus, these elements should be considered in PRO implementation.

Pre- vs. post-patients:

- Patients’ perception of the quality of patient-provider communication did not improve after PRO implementation and patients desired more information on symptom management and comfort.
- This suggests that while PRO implementation is an important tool to determine where communication gaps exist, additional strategies are needed to improve communication.

Conclusion

References