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ABSTRACTS – POSTERS

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What does it take to run a bone and soft tissue tumour service? An analysis of workload and funding of a regional bone and soft tissue tumour multidisciplinary team

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Introduction

The workload of a bone and soft tissue tumour multidisciplinary team can be diverse and varied. However, only a proportion of the workload attracts specific funding from the National Specialist Commissioning Advisory Group (NSCAG). In providing a service for sarcoma patients, the team is inevitably asked to see and treat large numbers of patients who do not have sarcomas. We were interested in analysing the workload of such a regional MDT to determine the range of conditions discussed, the expertise required to run a bone and soft tissue tumour MDT and the proportion of the workload that does not attract specific funding.

Methods

A prospectively collected database was used to identify new patients discussed at our weekly MDT meetings between 2005 and 2007 inclusively. Patients were categorised by their histological diagnoses into eight categories and identified as to whether or not they attracted funding under the NSCAG regulations. NSCAG funds all malignant primary bone tumours and the investigation and/or treatment of other selected conditions.

Results

There were 937 new patients discussed in our MDT meetings over three years. Almost half of these (49.5%, n=464) were classified as benign. Overall, only 178 (19%) patients were eligible for NSCAG funding.

		2005	2006	2007	Total
Benign	Primary bone tumour	27	26	38	91
	Other bone	27	23	27	77
	Soft tissue tumour	38	57	68	163
	Other soft tissue	35	43	55	133
	Sub-total	127	149	188	464
Malignant	Primary bone tumour	18	24	23	65
	Other bone	35	35	47	117
	Soft tissue sarcoma	61	91	100	252
	Other soft tissue	8	24	7	39
	Sub-total	122	174	177	473
TOTAL	249	323	365	937	

Conclusion and discussion

The workload of our MDT is increasing annually although the ratio of benign to malignant cases remains similar. Only 19% of patients were funded through NSCAG. The non-funded proportion has a cumulative impact year on year. Providing a comprehensive service for patients with suspected bone and soft tissue tumours also requires extensive expertise in the management of benign conditions.