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Patient opinion of the North of England Bone and Soft Tissue Tumour service

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Aims:

In 2004 The Bone and Soft Tissue Tumour Service based at the Freeman Hospital gained recognition as a specialist sarcoma service. As a result, the service formed standards with auditable outcomes based on the NICE guidelines for specialist cancer services. This study aimed to explore whether the Bone and Soft Tissue Tumour Service meets the standards set. It also compares the results of the current study to the results of the last service evaluation carried out in 2005.

Methods:

Four key domains identified from the current standards were explored including; face-to-face contact with healthcare professionals, access to a specialist nurse, knowledge of support services and hospital stay.

Design – retrospective questionnaire

Setting – Bone and Soft Tissue Tumour clinics, Musculoskeletal outpatients, Freeman Hospital

Subjects – 45 follow-up patients with a diagnosis of sarcoma.

Results:

Of the 45 patients who participated 100% were satisfied with face-to-face consultations with healthcare professionals. This included consultations regarding the diagnosis, investigations and results.

98% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their hospital stay.

In comparison to the previous study, access to the specialist nurse had improved by 22%. Although, not all patients currently access a specialist nurse.

Patients' knowledge of support services (sarcoma support group and helpline) has fallen since the previous survey.

80% (36/45) of patients had no complaints about the service.

Conclusion:

The results of this study suggest a high rate of satisfaction with the service currently delivered. Of the key areas explored, face-to-face consultations and satisfaction with hospital stay scored highly. Improvement in patient access to a specialist nurse may subsequently improve knowledge of support services. This means patients are better emotionally supported thus, further improving overall quality of service delivered.