

Healthcare professionals' views and priorities relating to head and neck cancer prehabilitation: A UK perspective

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Background:

To explore healthcare professionals' (HCP) views, priorities and training needs relating to head and neck cancer (HNC) prehabilitation (prehab).

Methods:

HCP working with HNC patients in the United Kingdom participated in an internet based survey. A descriptive cross-sectional design methodology was utilised to evaluate results.

Results:

Of 118 respondents, over 90% surmise that prehab benefits patients and HCP; with a preference for delivery in a multidisciplinary clinic. However, less than half of respondents believe they have capacity to provide prehab and would not be prepared to deliver a service in the next year. Participants report priorities for prehab service delivery to include: investment, having a multi-disciplinary team based approach and robust governance structures in place. To ensure confidence in delivery, most participants desire training on the subject area, with the majority opting for a blended learning approach. Training should incorporate 1) the component principles of prehab, 2) techniques to support service design and implementation.

Conclusion:

Findings describe professionals' views and capacity linked to HNC prehab; articulating clear priorities and training needs to be addressed. These findings, together with use of existing healthcare resources to support design of new services, should be considered when integrating prehab into the HNC pathway.