

Patient engagement with outpatient head and neck cancer physiotherapy services in a National Cancer Centre.

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Background:

The aim of this study was to examine patient engagement with outpatient head and neck cancer physiotherapy services in a National Cancer Centre.

Methods:

Physiotherapy documentation was reviewed to profile all clients attending outpatient hospital-based physiotherapy services between October 2021 and October 2022. Patient demographics and attendance information were collected.

Results:

In total 66 patients with HNC were referred to the exercise based physiotherapy prehabilitation service. Patients attended either online or in person exercise classes (n=16, 24%), were prescribed home based exercise programmes (n=26, 39%), did not have time before surgery for intervention (n=9, 14%), declined input (n=11, 17%) or had a change in medical plan (n=4, 6%). In total 70 patients were referred to the cancer rehabilitation service. The mean age of patients was 60±13 years (Range 14-86 years). Physiotherapy input included a single assessment and exercise advice session (24%), multiple sessions for 1:1 physiotherapy input (37%), group based supervised exercise programmes (22%) and onward referral (13%). In total 11% (n=8) of patients did not engage with the rehabilitation service.

Conclusion:

Patients with head and neck cancer engage in physiotherapy before and after cancer treatment in a variety of ways including in-person and online formats.