Western Sussex MAS Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Evaluating Effectiveness of a Breast Cancer Survivorship Program – Quality Improvement Pilot Study Dibendu Betal¹, Rachel Rolph¹, Lyn Phippen¹, Abi Bowen²

BACKGROUND

Survivorship programs aim to support the cancer patient transitioning from acute treatment to survivorship care in the community. Delivery of survivorship care has been recognised as an area of healthcare in need of development where current models may fail to meet the needs of survivors with little research in this field.

Breast Cancer Care is the only UK-Wide charity providing specialist information and support for people affected by breast cancer supporting them in their day-to-day life management and emotional upheaval of breast cancer and healthcare professionals who care for them.

Moving Forward Course helps people to adjust to life after hospital-based treatment. It is provided in partnership with NHS trusts and health boards across the UK. Information and support encouraging self-management of ongoing physical and emotional issues is provided in four sessions over four weeks sharing their experiences with peers in a safe and caring environment.

The objective of this pilot study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Breast Cancer Survivorship Program and how to enhance it further.

METHODS

All women who attended the Moving Forward Course between November 2015 and May 2018 were contacted by telephone with regards to evaluating the effectiveness of the impact of the course. Face-validated questionnaires were sent by post to those wishing to take part that focussed on four aspects of cancer survivorship – physical, social, psychological and spiritual well-being. Quantitative data was analysed using a 5-Likert Scale and qualitative data through free text at the end of the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Thirty-seven questionnaires were returned for analysis. The results of the four themes of physical, social, psychological and spiritual well being are summarised in Table 1.

Physical well being – the majority of women have kept physically active (95%), returned back to full activity (79%) and following a balance diet (86%). Most are not in pain (67%), able to sleep (56%) but report fatigue (70%). Social well being – The majority were confident in their appearance (67%), have a good support network (86%), able to speak to friends and family (81%), do not feel isolated (67%) and have confidence in their intimate relationship (51%). Psychological well being - Most patients had a good understanding of the side effects of treatment (86%), confident keeping breast aware (86%), aware of the signs and symptoms of recurrence (54%). However many worried about cancer recurrence (97%) and anxious of the future (65%). There was good knowledge of available support (94%) and felt support was readily accessible (89%). Spiritual well being - respondents did not feel more religious/spiritual (43%). Most understood the meaning of their diagnosis (75%) but felt uncertainty (57%). Some had gained inner strength (51%), majority were hopeful of the future (73%) and their perspective of life had changed (75%).

The main themes highlighted from the qualitative data was the establishment of an important support network course with fellow attendees. Some felt the course would have been useful when they were first diagnosed, others felt it would have been too much information at the time of diagnosis. Some felt the course could be adapted to account age differences, those that were working and have a program for partners. Others felt it would be useful to have a rolling program they could access as required.

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	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	I found the Moving Forward	For me, the moving forward	I found the moving forward	The course was the turning point
	Disagree				Agree	Course incredibly helpful and	course was as much as part	course incredible. I was in a bad	for me as I had lost all my
Physical Wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5	the group I attended have	of my treatment as the	place before and felt so much	confidence but it helped me move
I am keeping physically active	0%	5%	0%	57%	38%	kept in touch. We get	surgery and radiotherapy.	better afterwards. I have a lovely	on from my cancer, gave me
I have/am returning back to full activity	0%	13%	8%	30%	49%	together for an evening meal	Cancer does not only	new set of friends from the course and we meet up once a	understanding of why I felt like I did and a whole new group of
						every 3 months to support each other. I feel this should	require physical recovery, but also emotional and	month. I'm sure I will feel much	friends who understood my fears
I am able to sleep	8%	13%	22%	32%	24%	be encouraged with all	psychological recovery,	more confident after	and triumphs as they are in the
I often feel tired	3%	13%	13%	57%	13%	groups.	which is often overlooked.	reconstruction I'm sure.	same boat.
I am in pain most days	35%	32%	11%	11%	11%	Biodba	For me the Moving Forward	I found the talk on breast	
I am following a balance diet	0%	8%	5%	59%	27%	Would be beneficial to	Course has the right balance. I	and body awareness really	I found this Moving Forward Course so helpful. To attend this
Social Well Being	1	2	3	4	5	be part of a programme	thought I was doing ok when I	good. It gave you time to ask	course and be in a room with
I have confidence in my appearance	5%	16%	11%	51%	16%	further down the line	first went, but after the first	questions which I felt I didn't	other ladies who just understood
							week I realised I had a few	have time for at hospital appointments. It was good to	how you were feeling. Someone else knew exactly where you
I have a good support network	0%	5%	8%	32%	54%	for example, a year later	issues that needed my focus.	talk to other women in the	were coming from. To be able to
I often feel isolated	27%	40%	8%	22%	3%	to talk with other about	Over the four weeks I got this	same position and interesting	express your emotions and fears
I am able to talk to family and friends	3%	8%	8%	43%	38%	coping etc.	focus and moved on knowing life	to see how we were all handing it.	and have a laugh as well was for me amazing.
							is not all doom and gloom.	nanaing it.	
I am aware of financial help available	3%	16%	24%	49%	8%	I found the moving forward	If possible group ladies	I would just like to	I found the moving forward
						course very helpful and		reinforce the importance of	course very helpful. It was
I feel confident returning/have returned	5%	8%	32%	32%	22%	answered some of my concerns. It was reassuring to	ínto age groups e.g.	▲ · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	~ • • •
back to work						meet other in the same	under 50, 50-60, 60-	the moving forward course	being able to meet with
I feel confidence in my intimate	14%	11%	24%	35%	16%	situation to talk through	70. I feel a lot of the	and the impact it had on	people who had cone
relationship(s)						concerns that I had. Meeting a group who all still keep in	stress and recovery is	me, even though it was a	through the treatment. I
Psychological Well Being	1	2	3	4	5	touch makes me feel supported		year ago now. It helped me	found the experience very
I feel able to cope in stressful situations	11%	19%	19%	51%	0%	and free to discuss any worries.	age relevant.	so much!	supportive.
I have a good understanding of the side	0%	5%	8%	59%	27%	Figure 1 – A selection of comments from patients attending Moving Forward Course			
effects of treatment	070	5%	0 70	59%					
I am confident keeping breast aware	0%	5%	8%	54%	32%				
after treatment	070	070	070						
I am aware of the signs and symptoms	0%	27%	19%	38%	16%				
of breast cancer recurring elsewhere in						CONCLUSIONS			
the body									
I worry about cancer recurrence	0%	0%	3%	57%	40%				
I have a good knowledge about	0%	0%	5%	70%	24%	This pilot study has shown that a breast cancer survivorship programme is effective for physical, social, psychological and spiritual well-being even many months after the course. This forms the foundations for a larger focus group study to help implement and continually improve a programme that breast cancer survivors feel is effective and will be long-lasting.			
available support									
I feel support is readily accessible	0%	3%	8%	65%	24%				
I feel in control of my life	0%	24%	22%	46%	8%				
I am anxious about the future	5%	8%	22%	54%	11%				
Spiritual Well Being	1	2	3	4	5				
I feel more religious/spiritual	19%	24%	24%	24%	8%				
I am hopeful of the future	0%	8%	19%	62%	11%		DEEEL	DENICES	
I have gained inner strength since my	3%	16%	30%	32%	19%	REFERENCES			
cancer diagnosis									
I understand the meaning of my	0%	8%	16%	43%	32%				
diagnosis						1.Ganz PA, et al, Implementing a Survivorship Care Plan for Patients with Breast Cancer. J Clin Oncol 2008; 26:759-767			
I feel conflict between my religion and	43%	19%	38%	0%	0%				
diagnosis						2. Grunfeld E, et al, Evaluating Survivorship Care Plans: Results of a Randomized, Clinical			
I feel my perspective on life has	0%	3%	22%	35%	40%	Trial of Patients with Breast Cancer. J Clin Oncol 2011; 29:4755-4762			
changed						3. Gast KC, et al. Novel approaches to support breast cancer survivorship care models. The Breast 2017; 36:1-13			
I feel uncertainty in my life	3%	24%	16%	49%	8%				
Table 1 - Outcome of questionnaire		on four one	to of broop	taapaara	ur viv or obio				

Table 1 – Outcome of questionnaires focussing on four aspects of breast cancer survivorship

