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Title: Investigating recovery following lung cancer radiotherapy: testing the feasibility of establishing a prospective cohort

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Background

Little is known about support needs and patterns of recovery among lung cancer patients treated with curative intent radiotherapy, making it difficult to target services most effectively. Lung cancer patients are poorly represented in psychosocial literature, they have relatively low survival rates, are elderly, present with comorbidities, have high symptom burden and incidence is higher for those living in the most deprived areas. For these reasons they are deemed as difficult to recruit and retain in studies.

Aims

We aim to test the feasibility of establishing a longitudinal cohort of lung cancer patients.

Methods:

Eligible patients having radiotherapy between October 2015 and April 2016 at six UK centers will be recruited into a prospective, longitudinal cohort study. Participants will complete questionnaires, including quality of life, recovery, wellbeing, before treatment and three months later. Participants’ clinical details are also collected. Study procedures will be evaluated using semi-structured interviews with patient participants and local site staff.

Results:

We will assess the feasibility of recruiting and retaining patients for the duration of the study. Feasibility assessment will also be informed by interview data gathered on the acceptability of the study procedures, the questionnaires and the methods for gathering medical details.

Conclusion:

This feasibility testing will inform a large cohort study of patients undergoing treatment with curative intent (radiotherapy and surgery), we plan to follow patients for a number of years. This novel approach will enhance our ability to offer patients appropriate and timely support and identify who is most at risk of protracted recovery.

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