Patients' and healthcare professionals' perspectives on the future of PROMs in head and neck cancer care.

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Introduction

Although survival rates after head and neck cancer (HNC) have improved, patients' psychosocial and functional outcomes are inevitably affected by their disease and treatment. Measurement of these outcomes can be facilitated by patient-reported outcomes measures (PROMs), which, by providing patients' perspectives, are crucial in improving patient-centered care and shared decision-making. However, the administration of PROMs in outpatient clinics remains challenging. To improve the value and nationwide collection of PROM data, we conducted an exploratory survey on behalf of the two most important stakeholders:

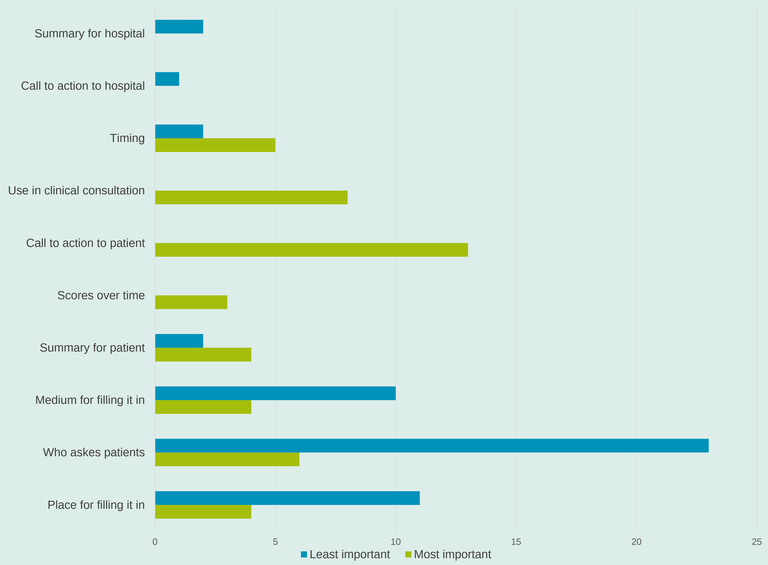
Patients (n=47)

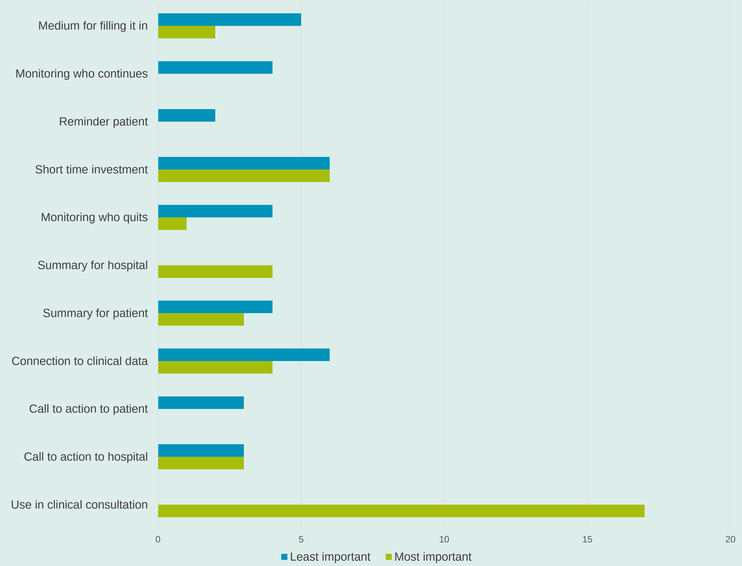
After a cognitive debriefing, the patient society for head and neck cancer (*in Dutch Patient Vereniging Hoofd-hals*, in short PVHH), published the survey on their social media and in their newsletter. Patients with mucosal HNC familiar with PROMs were invited.

Healthcare professionals (n=40)

Currently, the response rates of the PROMs within the Dutch Head and Neck Audit (DHNA) are low. Members of the multidisciplinary clinical audit board among all the head and neck oncologic centers were asked to fill in the survey and distribute it to their colleagues.

Most and least important factors for PROM administration and use





Results

For 30% of the patients, the most important facilitator of PROMs systems was integrating a call to action to patients if their score was worse than expected, followed by discussing patient-reported outcomes during clinical visits for 17%. However, while no clinician saw the importance of the call to action, 41% confirmed the importance of using PROMs during outpatient clinic visits. Fifteen percent agreed with the need to minimize the time patients spend completing the PROMs. However, provided clinicians used the outcomes for clinical purposes, the latter was not an issue for 15% of the patients.

Future perspectives: how to improve?

Although the value of PROMs was acknowledged in both groups, patients would like to be involved more in the clinical implications of their outcomes than clinicians think. Enhancing patients' involvement by a call to action and administering PROMs during outpatient clinic visits could improve their value.