

CLINICIAN ACCEPTANCE AND BARRIERS TO SEXUAL HEALTH CARE IN ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG ADULT CANCER PATIENTS (AYAC)

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Abstract Body

Background and Aim:

Short- and long-term side effects of cancer treatments on body image and sexual development with a high risk of developing further psychosocial distress and sexual dysfunction are increasingly recognized in AYAC. Nevertheless, these topics are rarely addressed by attending physicians and medical staff [1–5]. Until now there are no guidelines on how to support AYAC in this field. Our aim was to assess attitudes and potential barriers of health care professionals (HCPs) towards body image and sexual health in AYAC in order to enable the development of further supportive tools [6].

Methods:

We conducted a survey via Crowd Compass software during the 2nd national oncofertility summit at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne in 2019. Attending international pediatric oncology HCPs were asked to answer questions on their perceived importance, acceptability and feasibility of introducing sexual health practice into AYAC oncology care.

Results:

Sixty attendees participated to the survey, 98% considered body image and sexuality as an important to very important topic for AYAC. However, the degree of knowledge and confidence in addressing these topics were rated moderate to very low (72% and 71%). Only 55% (33/60) have been involved in discussions and 22% (13/60) stated to not discuss these topics at all. Main obstacles were missing supportive tools, lack of knowledge, time constraints, lack of clinical pathways and access to specialists. Fifty-nine of the 60 HCPs would like more guidance and further information support around these topics.

Conclusion:

Our survey confirms previous results showing lack of training, guidance and further information support being the main obstacles to discuss body image and sexuality in AYAC. Therefore, we started the project "justASKus" consisting of a specialized consultation, web-based information tools and workshops for survivors and HCPs.