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Implementation of a multi-professional care pathway and network for the promotion of needs-oriented exercise therapy for cancer patients – The MOVE-ONKO care approach

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Although substantial evidence underlines the benefits of physical activity (PA) and tailored exercise as a supportive strategy for cancer patients, exercise therapy is not yet part of standard oncology care. MOVE-ONKO aims to bridge this gap by implementing a multi-professional care pathway to promote needs-oriented exercise therapy for cancer patients in different oncological care settings.

Following the preparation phase, a specific evidence-based care pathway was implemented in 7 comprehensive cancer centers (CCCs) (year 2) and is currently being rolled out across 49 oncological care facilities (year 3-4). The pathway includes the following sequential steps: 1) symptom/side-effect screening, 2) brief consultations to raise patients' exercise awareness, 3) anamnesis and risk stratification based on exercise-relevant symptoms/comorbidities, 4) comprehensive exercise counselling, and 5) referral to needs-/preference-oriented exercise therapy.

Specifically trained oncological professionals in all care facilities conduct screenings and brief consultations with patients. For patients with no, mild or moderate symptoms/comorbidities, they may also provide comprehensive counselling and exercise-program referrals. Exercise oncology specialists based at the CCCs support the roll-out and manage complex patients with significant side effects/comorbidities. All steps are supported by an internally-developed telemedicine platform that guides users through the pathway, manages digital patient records, provides educational modules, and facilitates communication between patients and professionals.

The associated study evaluates implementation, reach, and patient outcomes [1]. Primary (patients' health-related quality of life) and secondary (PA behavior and motivation, patient activation) outcomes are assessed at inclusion and at 4, 12 and 24 weeks. A total of 2.240 cancer patients will be recruited. Care structures/processes are evaluated through questionnaires and interviews from both healthcare providers' and patients' perspectives.

The MOVE-ONKO pathway is currently implemented in 7 CCCs and 33 oncological facilities. Of the 1.857 patients screened, 1.375 are participating. Beyond the pathway, initial results of the ongoing study regarding reach and outcomes will be presented.

Keywords

exercise promotion, exercise oncology, counselling, exercise therapy

Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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