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Contribution ID: 318

Type: 1 - Scientific Poster

A Qualitative Investigation of Family Experiences of ‘CHAMPs’: a 12-week Multi-component Physical Activity Behaviour Change Intervention for Childhood and Adolescent Survivors of Cancer

Wednesday 22 July 2026 12:25 (20 minutes)

Purpose:

This qualitative study used focus groups (FGs) to explore family experiences of CHAMPs (The Childhood and adolescent cancer survivors physical Activity and Movement Programme). CHAMPs is a 12-week multi-component physical activity (PA) behaviour change intervention for childhood and adolescent survivors of cancer (CASC) aged 10 to 19 years.

Methodology:

CHAMPs aimed to improve PA, quality of life (QoL) and physical functioning among CASC. It was evaluated as part of a single-arm repeated measures study. Online debrief FGs were conducted by an independent qualitatively-trained researcher with young people who had completed CHAMPs, and their parents. Participants were asked to share their experiences regarding i) their engagement with each component of the intervention (e.g. supervised home-based sessions, PA toolkit), ii) the impact of the intervention on their PA and well-being, and iii) recommendations for intervention improvement. Discussions were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using reflective thematic analysis.

Results:

Three and two FGs were conducted with CASC (n=9) and parents (n=6), respectively. Fifty-six per cent of teenage participants (mean age 14.7yrs (\pm 1.9 SD); 67% male) had had a brain tumour and 100% had received chemotherapy. Sixty-seven percent of parents (88% female) were parents of a child who had had a brain tumour. Three themes, denoted by T, were identified. The young-person centred, home-based nature and personalization aspect of the intervention were reported as strengths, which contributed to an inclusive and supportive environment for PA (T1). Families credited CHAMPs with improving the young person's physical function which in turn optimized QoL and social and emotional well-being (T2). Recommendations were provided to inform future CHAMPs delivery in research and service settings (T3).

Conclusion:

Families described the positive effect of CHAMPs on young people's physical functioning, overall well-being and QoL, and deemed it acceptable to 10–19-year-old CASC.

Keywords

cancer, qualitative, physical activity, behaviour change

Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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Session Classification: Poster Session