

International Nutrition Audit in FOREgut TuMors: INFORM **Advancing Optimal Nutrition Care in Cancer**

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Description

INFORM is an international, multicentre initiative aimed at identifying current key nutrition care practices in cancer care settings across the world. Our ultimate goal is to highlight gaps in practice, identify strategies that will reduce the risk of malnutrition and advance nutrition care in patients with foregut tumors.

Background & Rationale

Patients with foregut tumors (esophageal, head & neck cancer) are amongst the highest risk for developing malnutrition due to the nature of their disease and the complex and lengthy treatment trajectory. This has a significant impact on outcomes of importance to patients, health care professionals and health systems. A qualitative study in Canadian and European cancer settings has identified the need to create standardized nutrition care pathways for these patients, however, it is essential to understand current nutrition practices, standards, patient experiences and the relationship of nutrition care to outcomes first. Our work with INFORM will provide a rare insight into the current care provided by nutrition/cancer care experts and into experiences of patients with foregut tumors at a global level. This foundational work will advance nutrition care in cancer broadly.

Objectives and scope

In a prospective, inception cohort pilot study we will describe current key nutrition care practices in approximately 200 patients from 10 Cancer Care settings in North America, Europe and Australia. Consenting patients will be followed by the registered dietician/delegate from time of presentation to the cancer care setting (baseline) to a maximum of 6 months. Data on cancer care setting, patient characteristics, nutrition practices, patient generated subjective global assessment (PG-SGA), patient satisfaction with care (CANHELP lite), cancer treatments and 3 and 6 month survival will be collected. Funding has been received from multiple sources to partially support the study for development of the procedures, database, data analysis and collaborations. Following the pilot phase, our goal is to engage with multiple international centers to gather data on approximately 1000 patients to create an international registry.

Planned activities & deliverables

Enrolment in Canadian centres has been completed (71 patients) and is nearing completion in Netherlands (18/20 patients). By October 2017, we hope to have enrolment started in Italy, Australia, US and the UK and expect to meet our target goal of 200 patients by May 2018. Deliverables of the pilot related to data analyses include 1) descriptions of cancer care setting, patients, nutrition processes and practices, treatment, PGSGA and CANHELP 2) how well nutrition intervention is delivered (timing of start, adequacy and the route) and 3) how nutrition and PGSGA may correlate with outcomes of survival, treatment and unplanned re-admissions. We expect to have the preliminary analyses done by September 2018 in time for the ESPEN congress, with final analyses ready by January 2019. Other deliverables include an online registry platform, study procedure/training modules and help files. Starting September 2017, we will also start to engage with other cancer care settings to join the initiative for the larger phase.

Resources & enablers

We are asking for EU 30,000 to cover costs related to the project coordination (EU 15,000), investigator meetings (EU 9,000) and website development (EU 6,000) over 2 years to assist with the completion of the pilot phase and initiate the next phase of INFORM by recruiting more centers, creating new tools and resources. Strategic approaches to ensure success and feasibility of the project include ongoing collaboration with international experts at ESPEN, Canadian Nutrition Society and Clinical Nutrition Week; modification of procedures based on evaluation of site barriers, feedback and preliminary data; and promotion of project and sharing of results at international conferences.

Results/outcomes & expected impact

By describing the current key nutrition practices in patients with foregut tumors, we will be able to report on how nutrition is currently being provided across several cancer care settings. We have structured data capture and analysis plan to inform a wide variety of knowledge users including health professionals (surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, nurses, dietitians, speech language pathologists), patients and health care administrators. Building upon the Knowledge to Action cycle, we will assist participating centers in identifying knowledge-practice gaps through the illumination of current practice and comparison to similar centers and to international benchmarks. This work will facilitate the assessment of barriers and facilitators to nutrition care locally thereby allowing sites to tailor interventions to their local context. By correlating nutrition care with patient and clinical outcomes, we aim to greatly enhance the evidence base in this area and link it to patient experience. The expansion of the pilot study to cancer care settings around the world will allow us to create a larger prospective registry of nutrition practices and outcomes in patients with foregut tumors. This will assist with the development of effective screening and treatment pathways and will also identify key areas of nutrition care that warrant further study. Our innovative, patient oriented project is unique in its ability to inform nutrition and cancer care through a collaborative of committed nutrition experts from around the world, working together to find global solutions to nutrition care in cancer.