CURRENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES:

Within the UK, Breast Cancer Care and the NHS run in

the Nordic Cancer

Aim to provide information on nutrition, exercise, cancer fatigue

An Exploratory Study of Experiences and Perceptions of Patients with Breast Cancer Who Have Undertaken a 2-Day Retreat

INTRODUCTION:

In the UK, 1 in 8 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every 10 minutes (Breast Cancer Care, 2015). Over the past 10 years survival rate has increased by 70% yet numerous challenges are encountered daily such as fatigue, physical deconditioning, lack of motivation, lowered self-esteem and many more (Hoffman et al., 2007; Sportet et al., 2012; Olo et al., 2014).

Numerous benefits are linked to Physical Activity (PA) and Breast cancer survivors. (Cutts-Read et al., 2012; Guinness et al., 2016; Hodd et al., 2019). More specifically, Nordic Walking and Yoga have displayed positive outcomes amongst breast cancer survivors such as improved quality of life, increased range of motion as well as combatt[1]ing fatigue (Arora et al., 2011; Johnson and Johnson, 2014; Speed-Andrews et al., 2014).

In 2016, a 2-Day stayover retreat offering a range of activities was set up in the North West of England for Primary and Secondary breast cancer survivors.

The retreat incorporated the specific activities aforementioned as well as providing a networking platform via a number of social media networks for participants to interact with one another.

An intervention shown to enhance empowerment amongst survivors (Bertram et al., 2016).

HERIARCHY OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE:

HEALTHY LIVING FRAMEWORK

Motivation: To stay as healthy as possible and to still be here in the next 10–15 years. I know I’m not well enough to think it won’t come back and I can keep that period of time between when it does come back and long as possible so you know that’s my motivation for staying healthy.” ([P9])

Increased Physical Activity Levels:

“I went on the retreat during chemo and started exercising again with jogging and running… as a result I ran through my last two chemo treatments” ([P3])

Invaluable Peer Support Network:

“The retreat went above what I expected, and it was the ability to spend time with someone similar to me… I know as a previous Oncology nurse I’ve kind of not attached or interacted with other patients… I’ve struggled to be the patient’ But after taking part I felt the barriers had fallen off and throughout my cancer journey the retreat has probably been the most positive experience and even now I’m still in contact with the other women and I’m still reaping the benefits.” ([P9])

“Improved Mental Well Being:

For me it’s mental support. I didn’t even think I would have been able to do this. I think it would have been so much harder for me to be as positive and outcome and part of the deal is probably for what I make of it. I think you just need to feel sure to get out and get away from everything and get out and breathe and getting sweaty, I don’t know it makes you feel like you’ve achieved something… gives you a buzz.” ([P9])

FUTURE RESEARCH:

A longitudinal study following participants who participated in a retreat to measure the improvements on quality of life.

Investigation into a retreat intervention with men, in the UK, over 200 men are diagnosed with breast cancer per year (NICE, 2015).

Studies investigating the adherence and activity levels of other types of cancer survivor e.g. prostate.

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STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS:

- Increased number of participants.
- Size of sample.
- Minimising bias.
- Limitations of sample size.
- Limitations of sample recruitment.
- Limitations of self-reporting.
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- Limitations of self-reporting.
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