Departmental practice on informed consent in radiotherapy: A UK evaluation

My name is Marie Pagett and I am conducting a questionnaire as part of my MSc (Radiotherapy Planning) dissertation at Sheffield Hallam University. This evaluation questionnaire is being circulated to all radiotherapy departments throughout the UK. You have been invited to take part in this study evaluating your department practice of informed consent processes. Before you decide to take part, please take time to read this information to understand why the evaluation is being done and what it will involve.

What is the purpose of this study?

I am interested in evaluating and understanding departmental practice in informed consent processes for patients about to receive radiotherapy treatment that have either capacity or a lack of capacity to consent as there is very limited research in this area. I would like to ask each radiotherapy department questions about how consent for radiotherapy treatment is gained for patients; the processes of consent for patients who lack capacity to consent for treatment and when the department last updated its consent policy.

Who can take part?

Any registered therapy radiographer who has regular patient contact, an awareness of consent processes and practice in the radiotherapy department and is able to access the department's policy on consent. Please read the questions carefully and respond as honestly as you can.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. If you do take part, you will be asked to select boxes consenting that you understand this. If you change your mind part way through you can close the browser window.

What will happen if I do take part?

You will be asked to complete questions comprising of a combination of check boxes and free-text boxes. There are no wrong answers, you are not being timed. It is anticipated the survey will take between 5-10mins

Are there any risks in taking part?

I do not anticipate any risks to taking part.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The evaluation may result in improved department understanding of consent processes to enhance patients and their carers care and improved radiographer awareness of consent.

Will my participation be kept confidential?

Yes. You will be asked to name your department, this will be anonymised so privacy is protected and departments will be given a unique ID code. The anonymous data will be kept securely in electronic form by the data custodian, Marie Pagett until 2024.

What if I am unhappy or there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to contact myself or my supervisor

Ms Keeley Rosbottom; k.rosbottom@shu.ac.uk If you would rather contact an independent person, please contact Faculty Health and Wellbeing Research Ethics Committee secretary on s.wallace@shu.ac.uk

What will happen to the results?

Once the evaluation study is complete, the results will be analysed and aim to be published in an academic journal. You or your department will not be identified in anyway within the publication.

What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You can stop participation by closing the survey window, no reason is needed.

I have some more questions

Please raise any further questions you have with the researcher who will be happy to answer your query on [redacted]

MSc (Radiotherapy Planning) Departmental practice on informed consent in radiotherapy: A UK evaluation

CONSENT

Please agree to the 6 short statements below to gain your informed consent. The survey will start after agreement to all the statements

* 1. I agree to the following statements

- *I have read and understood the information given for this study*
- *My participation is voluntary; I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason*
- *I will be asked to name my department. The name will be anonymised as soon as possible after data collection and a unique ID code will be used to maintain confidentiality*
- *All data collected will be treated confidentially and only available to the researcher*
- *The data will be stored securely at all times*
- *The information provided will be used as part of a MSc (Radiotherapy Planning) dissertation at Sheffield Halllam University*
- *I agree to take part in the study*

◯ Agree

◯ Disagree

* 2. Please state the name of your department

SECTION 1

<u>Section 1:</u> These questions relate to your departmental practice of informed consent procedures for patients prior to radiotherapy treatment.

* 3. Is written consent to radiotherapy treatment obtained routinely?

- ◯ Yes, for all treatments
- ◯ Yes, for some treatments
- ◯ No, not routinely

4. For Q3, if you answered either

- Yes, for some treatments OR
- No, not routinely

Please identify the sites/circumstances where informed consent is <u>NOT</u> routinely obtained

* 5. Where written consent is obtained; do patients receive a copy of their consent form?

- ◯ Yes, in all circumstances
- ◯ Yes, in most circumstances
- ◯ No

6. If you answered

- Yes, in most circumstances OR
- No

Please explain your understanding as to why patients do not receive a copy of their consent forms

* 7. Moving forward to the start of radiotherapy treatment.
Is the consent form signed before the first fraction by a health care professional to confirm the patients' agreement to treatment?

- ◯ Yes, in all circumstances
- ◯ Yes, in most circumstances
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure

SECTION 2

<u>Section 2</u>: The next 3 questions considers patients who lack capacity to consent for their own radiotherapy treatment

Capacity means the ability to use and understand information to make a decision and communicate any decisions made. A person is considered to lack capacity if their mind is impaired or disturbed in some way, meaning they are unable to make a decision at that time (NHS.uk)

Some examples of people who could be considered to lack capacity include those people with: bipolar disorder, dementia, learning difficulties, loss of consciousness, schizophrenia, stroke/brain injury, substance abuse or substance addiction.

* 8. In your department is radiotherapy treatment given to patients considered to lack capacity?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure

9. Please identify how a patients capacity to consent for radiotherapy treatment is assessed in the department
(select all that apply)

- ☐ Capacity assessment tool
- ☐ Clinical judgement
- ☐ Cognitive assessment tool
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Family/Next of Kin wishes
- ☐ Health professional judgement
- ☐ Not Sure

* 10. In the case of patients who lacks capacity; which of the following options most closely matches your departmental practice?

*A patients representative may include: family members, people close to the patient, independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA) or an attorney or court appointed deputy.

- [ ] The standard written consent form is used with no signature from the patient
- [ ] The standard written consent form is used with the patients representative* signing the form on their behalf
- [ ] The standard written consent form is used with the patient who lacks capacity signing the form
- [ ] A separate consent form designed especially for those who lack capacity to consent is completed by the clinician with involvement from the patients representative*
- [ ] A separate consent form designed especially for those who lack capacity to consent is completed by the clinician with no involvement from the patients representative*
- [ ] No consent form is used
- [ ] Not sure
- [ ] Other (please specify)

SECTION 3

<u>Section 3</u>: The final questions relate to the new guidelines on consent and radiographer education. You may need to access your departmental policy surrounding consent.

In 2018 a new NICE accredited SCoR professional document was published called 'Obtaining Consent – a clinical guideline for the diagnostic imaging and radiotherapy workforce' This document contains 10 recommendations to assist radiographers to ensure informed consent has been undertaken.

* 11. At what level is your consent policy written for?

- ◯ Trust-wide policy
- ◯ Oncology specific policy
- ◯ Radiotherapy specific policy
- ◯ Don't know
- ◯ Other (please specify)

* 12. Looking at the latest copy of your departmental consent policy. Has the policy on consent been updated since January 2018?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

13. If your policy has been updated since January 2018; does the policy make reference to the 2018 SCoR professional document?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

* 14. Do radiographers attend training in consent in your department/Trust?

- ◯ Yes, upon appointment only
- ◯ Yes, annual mandatory training
- ◯ Yes, optional training
- ◯ Other (please specify)
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure

15. If radiographers in your department attend training in consent.
Does the training in your department/Trust include consent process for patients who lack the capacity to consent for treatment?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure

16. Thank you for taking time to complete the survey.
If you have any additional comments please specify below