



Review article

Embracing service user involvement in radiotherapy education: A discussion paper

Gareth Hill ^{a,*}, Gillian Thompson ^b, Susan Willis ^b, Denyse Hodgson ^b^a Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Rosemere Cancer Centre, Royal Preston Hospital, Preston PR2 9HT, UK^b Sheffield Hallam University, Broomhall Rd, Sheffield S10 2BP, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 15 May 2013

Received in revised form

25 July 2013

Accepted 20 August 2013

Available online 14 September 2013

Keywords:

Service user involvement

Radiotherapy education

ABSTRACT

Aim: There is currently a drive within cancer services to incorporate user involvement in delivery and education, as such the aim of this article is to investigate the potential role of service users in pre-registration education and how this could impact on radiotherapy programmes.

Method: Key databases were searched for terms: *patient participation, service user involvement, health care education, student assessment, patient involvement, pre-registration education and training*. Suitable literature was reviewed and references within all articles and documents were investigated to ensure as broad and an inclusive search possible.

Results: There is little published literature indicating user involvement in radiotherapy education but many studies in nursing, medicine and other allied health professions indicate a rationale for user involvement.

Discussion: There are benefits of involving service users, i.e. gaining insight from patients and carers perspectives, challenges stereotypes and assumptions. Disadvantages include the quality of the feedback from users in assessment, resources required, and the ethical considerations.

Conclusion: Inclusion of service users in radiotherapy education is recommended in line with cancer care policy, they provide a unique perspective to learning and involvement should be encouraged.

© 2013 The College of Radiographers. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

There is currently an increased understanding of ‘individualism’ in relation to patients within the United Kingdom; involvement with one’s own health care is now being encouraged in order to empower patients through their journey, increasing patients’ own learning, and thus adding to their overall wellbeing.¹

The National Cancer Action Team (NCAT) 2008 policy, *Service user involvement in cancer care – policy, principles, practice* defines service users as²:-

“Cancer patients and their carers (‘carers’ includes family members and friends) who are involved in working with health service personnel to improve people’s experience of cancer services.”

Service user involvement is now policy within cancer care and therefore should be employed throughout cancer services,

including pre-registration education programmes, as part of this ethos.² The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) have recently conducted a consultation on whether to include user involvement in pre-registration programmes as a mandatory standard for education and training³; the standards are set and act as a benchmark for education providers. As such all pre-registration programmes must meet these standards to allow their students admission to the HCPC Register to practice within the United Kingdom.

Under current HCPC standards, students training within a clinical setting will encounter some level of patient and carer contact as part of this process. With most radiography programmes within the UK providing approximately half of their training in the clinical environment,⁴ patients and carers, and therefore service users, will be involved in the training of pre-registrants to some degree. However, it is important to attempt to actively seek out and engage service users in the provision of the academic element of programmes as well to aid in the improvement of cancer services.

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) discusses how patient participation and involvement align well within its corporate aims, and that the simulation of practice-related issues and skills through the inclusion of service users in education can be used to provide

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 01772 522694.

E-mail addresses: Gareth.hill@lthtr.nhs.uk (G. Hill), g.thompson@shu.ac.uk (G. Thompson), S.Willis@shu.ac.uk (S. Willis), d.a.hodgson@shu.ac.uk (D. Hodgson).

greater focus for the student on patient safety issues, as well as providing a wide range of possibilities for users to share their experiences of care to develop insight and empathy for learners.⁵ The HEA have the dedicated project team, The Health and Social Care Cluster, to support and inspire the national network of learning and teaching practitioners within health care education and training. User involvement is therefore key to the future developments of pre-registration programmes in the UK, such as radiotherapy and radiography.

There is a lack of published literature indicating support for user involvement in radiotherapy education despite impending HCPC requirements and the afore mentioned NCAT service user cancer care policy.² This does not imply, however, that service users are not used in the training of today's radiographers, but that there is merely a scarcity of published examples necessitating an enquiry into the extent of current user involvement in this context.

Other professions, especially nursing, have a good record of including service users within their education programmes.^{6–8} If radiotherapy education providers are to meet the challenges of new policy implementation, they will have to draw on the experiences of others to best facilitate this.

The aim of this review is to investigate the potential role of service users in pre-registration education and how this could impact on radiotherapy programmes.

The discussion of the article will focus on examining the current levels to which service users are involved within radiotherapy pre-registration education, and will draw from evidence and experiences from other professions to suggest possible applications within the field of radiotherapy.

Methodology

A broad ranging literature search was carried out on CINAHL, MEDLINE and AMED, uncovering a variety of sources relating to user involvement in pre-registration education. Key words and terms searched included: *patient participation, service user involvement, health care education, student assessment, patient involvement, pre-registration education and training*. Articles were reviewed and selected on the basis that only those relating to user involvement in education could be used. Searches using the same terms were also carried out on the document libraries on the Department of Health, Society and College of Radiographers and The Higher Education Academy websites to uncover any potential policy documentation in the area of user involvement. Once suitable literature was reviewed, references within these articles and documents were then investigated to ensure as broad and inclusive a search as possible. The decision was taken to not include the terms *cancer* or *radiotherapy* within the initial search as too few articles were revealed relating to cancer patients and radiotherapy education.

Results

Thirty research articles from a variety of publications and four policy documents from several sources were uncovered in the literature search. The search results were then analysed for this paper. Two papers were excluded from this study because they related to post-registration learning and were deemed inappropriate. The data revealed contrasting views and various applications of user involvement within professional pre-registration programmes. The papers were then categorised by topic area: *Service user involvement in radiotherapy education, Service user involvement in other professional groups*. Results uncovered from other professional groups were then further sub-categorised into topics: *Assessment, Curriculum development, Carer teaching and*

patient journey, and Student selection and professional service users. The groupings then formulated a structure to the discussion regarding the level of service user involvement in the UK.

Discussion

Service user involvement in radiotherapy education

There is only a small amount of published literature indicating service user involvement in radiotherapy education^{9–12}; therefore the extent to which user involvement is utilised in radiotherapy education is unknown, indicating a need to conduct further study to add to the literature base.

Involvement within radiotherapy education tends to focus on communication skills and the patient journey. Recent studies conducted by Williamson¹⁰ discuss how final year radiotherapy students were required to put questions to a panel of cancer survivors. The goal of the study was to provide a different learning experience to allow the students a better perspective when meeting current HCPC and other statutory requirements surrounding the physical and psychosocial wellbeing of cancer patients. Students reported positive outcomes in terms of learning and highlighted the needs of carers as well as the patients.

Ball and Green have carried out similar work whereby service users contributed to focus group discussions relating to patient care across all years of a radiotherapy programme.¹¹ Students were able to ask questions relating to experiences of users by attending a cancer support centre and head and neck study days, as well as the users themselves contributing to third year assessments. The study indicates that all user activities were preceded with introductory lectures for students and briefings for service users, and highlights the importance and necessity of proving information and support to both parties. Students that participated in the groups provided comments at the end of the sessions to evaluate the effectiveness of service user involvement. Learners from all years of the programme commented that the sessions were useful in improving communication skills and it was felt the student experience was enhanced by the users adding further relevance and improved quality to the subject areas covered. The study also indicated that user expenses and fees were paid, but didn't indicate if this was a prior condition of user participation.

Williamson and Pope have utilised, in a further study, video conferencing facilities to interview cancer survivors.⁹ The study was deemed to have had similar positive outcomes as others within radiotherapy, but had some effects that could be deemed negative and this should be considered. The students within this study became visibly distressed about the subject matters raised by the service users themselves. This can be seen as a positive outcome as students begin to understand the complexity of the individual's emotional experience. However, student emotions should be carefully managed. In addition to the resources for video conferencing equipment, this work highlighted how a trained counsellor was present to offer guidance to those affected. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and information and support was offered to the service users following interactions with the students.

Gratton engaged radiotherapy students in conducting interviews with patients relating to their experiences after being hospitalised.¹² The study discusses how interviewing cancer patients can inform on students' communication skills but failed to indicate several factors contributing to a study of this kind, such as the forum of the interviews, consent, access, and ethical approval. The study is in excess of fifteen years old, but was considered worth including within this paper due to the lack of published literature relating to service user involvement within radiotherapy education.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/2737350>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/2737350>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)