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Reinforcing partnership between cancer patient, general practitioner and oncologist during chemotherapy –a randomised controlled trial

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Background & Aim: International guidelines underline the importance of strengthening the coordination and continuity of cancer care. The different roles of general practitioners and oncologists with regard to treatment, follow-up and rehabilitation during and after cancer treatment are often obscure to cancer patients. Parallel courses of healthcare are often taking place instead of coordinated care characterised by continuity and partnership between care providers. Patients may feel uncertain about the health professionals' skills and area of responsibility. Healthcare seeking and support during and after cancer treatment may, therefore, be inappropriate, leaving patients feeling insecure and lost between care providers. The study aims to design and evaluate a new way of communication and shared decision-making that brings the patient, the oncologist and general practitioner together in a shared video consultation in the early phase of chemotherapeutic treatment. This presentation focuses on study design phase and experiences from the pilot study with acceptability of study participation of GPs and patients.

Method: The effect of the intervention in addition to usual care will be tested in a randomised controlled trial at Vejle Hospital, Denmark. Based on sample size calculation, we intend to include 300 patients at the Department of Oncology and their general practitioners. Results and process outcomes will be evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively, using footage of the consultations, questionnaires to patients, general practitioners and oncologists, and data from registers. The quantitative outcomes at patient level will include shared-care (primary outcome), health-related quality of life, continuity, illness intrusiveness, depression and anxiety.

Results: Data collection for the pilot study is completed, and inclusion for the main study will start March 2016. Status and perspectives Experiences from the pilot study and the final study design will be presented at the Wonca Europa Conference 2016 meeting.