

## OP28.6

### **Cancer survivorship – barriers encountered by general practitioners in Ireland**

*MT O'Shea(1), Claire Collins(1), R Codd(2), M Laffoy(2)*

*(1) Irish College of General Practitioners, Department of Research, Dublin, Ireland*

*(2) National Cancer Control Programme, Dublin, Ireland*

*Corresponding author: Dr Claire Collins, Irish College of General Practitioners, Department of Research, Dublin, Ireland. E-mail: claire.collins@icgp.ie*

**Background & Aim:** Cancer survivors may experience a wide range of complex health issues as a result of their cancer type and treatment. Some health issues can have a lifelong impact on patients, while others related to cancer treatment can last up to five years post-treatment. Cancer survivors have increased rates of health care utilisation compared to non-cancer patients. During active cancer treatment, GPs may provide care to their patients. Post cancer treatment, patients routinely participate in follow-up care with their GPs. The transition back into the primary care setting can be difficult for both GPs and patients to navigate. What are the current barriers encountered by general practitioners in Ireland in the area of cancer survivorship?

**Method:** The study consisted of a literature review and a quantitative survey of GPs for the National Cancer Control Programme in Ireland. Postal questionnaires were sent in April 2015 to 2,822 GPs in the Republic of Ireland. A total of 514 completed surveys were analysed, a response rate of 18.2%.

**Results:** A large portion of GPs (93.5%) had never attended a survivorship course, conference or workshop. Overall, 64.7% of respondents sometimes, rarely or never share follow-up care for their patients with oncology consultants. Only 17.2% and 19.7% of GPs respectively considered that they had enough information on the 'possible long-term issues from chemotherapy' and 'possible long-term issues from radiation therapy'. Over three-quarters of GPs considered that they did not have sufficient information on 'recommended evidence based surveillance for patients with a previous cancer'.

**Conclusions:** This survey provides some insight into the current situation in Ireland with regard to cancer survivorship from a GP perspective. GPs will increasingly follow-up with patients who are living through cancer treatment and after cancer survivorship. Further education for GPs is clearly indicated as necessary in this area.