

Efficacy of an occupational therapy-based intervention in people with advanced cancer: A randomised controlled trial

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Introduction/Rationale: Many people with advanced cancer face difficulties performing and participating in everyday activities. This may reduce their health-related quality of life (HRQoL). Yet, very little is known about efficacious occupational therapy-based interventions for this group of people. We therefore developed the 'Cancer Home Life-Intervention' consisting of a tailored, adaptive, occupational therapy-based program with one to three home visits and telephone contacts.

Objective: To evaluate the efficacy of the 'Cancer Home Life-Intervention' compared with usual care in advanced cancer patients' performance of and participation in everyday activities, and its efficacy on their HRQoL.

Method: This randomised, controlled trial recruited advanced cancer patients with functional limitations from two Danish hospitals. They were assessed at baseline (T1) and at the 6-week (T2) and 12-week (T3) follow-up. The primary outcome was activities of daily living (ADL) motor ability at T3. Secondary outcomes were ADL process ability at T3; difficulties with prioritised everyday activities, participation restrictions, and HRQoL at T2 and T3.

Results: We randomised 242 participants to either the intervention group (n=121) or the control group (n=121). Final follow-up was completed by 191 participants, which was sufficient to reach the required sample size according to the power calculation. We found no statistically significant between-group differences on any outcome.

Conclusion: The occupational therapy-based program for people with advanced cancer produced non-significant results. Future studies should investigate possible moderators of treatment effectiveness, the beneficial experience of the intervention, the success of the implementation and its cost-effectiveness to inform future interventions.