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References
2. Fallowfield et al. Evaluation of an educational program to improve communication with patients about early phase trial participation. The Oncologist 2012, 17 (3) 377-383

Risk of recurrence scores (RSs) from genomic profiling tests such as OncotypeDX® and EndoPredict® are being used increasingly with other clinico-pathologic features to help determine the likely benefit of adjuvant chemotherapy in early stage breast cancer. Decision-making requires the balancing of likely absolute benefits in terms of preventing recurrence versus the treatment related side effects. Health literacy and numeracy skills in the general population are often poor thus explaining risk and uncertainty can be confusing especially when set against a backdrop of fear and anxiety. Clinicians are facing more of these types of conversations with their patients, so we developed an educational package (TARGET), similar in structure to previous evidence-based communication programmes (1, 2).

• Discussions were held with:-
  • key clinicians using gene expression profiling tests
  • clinical-scientists about test development
• Review of the risk literature
• Difficulties identified from the above included:-
  • problems encountered when explaining high, intermediate and low risk test results
  • challenges faced when communicating risk scores to patients with different personality & socio-educational characteristics

Modules 3-7 are scenarios based on real clinical situations demonstrating some of the issues that can arise when discussing RSs with for example, low risk patients who nevertheless wish to have chemotherapy, and high risk patients who are averse to chemotherapy.

• if the evaluation demonstrates positive results we will train facilitators to use materials worldwide
• we will add further modules to the package as data emerge on the utility of other genomic tests