

SCAF/18/02 - Improving cancer survivorship care through theory-based, tailored eHealth interventions

In the UK, the number of cancer survivors is expected to grow every decade from 2.1 million in 2010 to 5.3 million in 2040. Cancer survivors have a range of unmet health and practical needs. eHealth has huge potential to improve the quality of health care, but has not fulfilled its promise so far because interventions have failed to address problems faced by patients, and there have been many technological issues.

This programme of research will develop eHealth cancer digital support for people with colorectal and prostate cancer. The research will involve collaboration between patients, healthcare professionals, researchers, NHS eHealth, charities, design professionals, and commercial technology experts.

The first stage will be to investigate the workload of managing health after a diagnosis of prostate or colorectal cancer (treatment burden). Treatment burden will be investigated through scientific literature review, interviews with patients, carers, and healthcare professionals, a questionnaire, and analysis of routinely collected healthcare data.

Our understanding of treatment burden and the problems faced by patients will be fed into design events, during which our collaborators will come together to develop interventions that meet the needs of people undergoing follow up for prostate and colorectal cancer.

We will test the potential of our cancer digital support systems with around fifty patients. We will deliver the interventions securely on-line. Our ambition is that our new systems of cancer digital support will become widely available throughout the NHS.