

The Role of Clinical Trials in Diagnosis of Malignant Tumours

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Adult patients with malignant brain tumours have poor prognoses and have seen very modest increases in survival over the previous few decades. More than 50% of cancer patients often join in clinical trials when they are eligible and offered. According to a 2016 survey of brain tumour patients by the National Brain Tumor Society, only 21% of patients with brain tumours participated in a clinical trial and only 24% of patients were informed of clinical trials at the time of diagnosis. Similarly, according to a 2018 report on the state of Glioblastoma (GBM) clinical trials, only 8–11% of newly diagnosed GBM patients join in these studies. Less than 30% of all patients are referred for clinical trials, according to the survey's findings, but more than one-third of participants reported that their institution did not track clinical trial referral, making precise calculations challenging.

Patient and community factors

Understanding of the variables preventing patients with brain tumours from participating in clinical trials is lacking. The influence of the disease on cognition, behaviour, and motor skills, which can affect patients' ability to make decisions about their own health care, their ability to work, and their sense of control, makes disease-specific study on these variables extremely important. With the aim of identifying potential for creating interventions to increase participation, this section assesses patient and community issues that may make it difficult for individuals to take part in clinical trials.

Patient-specific factors

Social inequities, linguistic or cultural difficulties, and advanced age are a few of the factors that have a detrimental impact on participation in brain tumor studies. These issues are prevalent in oncology. Given the disease's effect on neurocognitive function, several factors are specific to the population.

The timing and manner in which clinical trials are discussed with patients may have an impact on accrual, especially if the patient has a limited comprehension of the studies and the health care professional has difficulty explaining them to them. A new or

recurring cancer diagnosis can also cause emotional and psychosocial upheaval, which is when clinical trials are often presented.

Prior research has shown that effective communication, a strong patient-physician relationship that fosters trust and a patient-friendly presentation of clinical trial information are factors that are associated with improved oncology trial participation, underscoring the significance of these two factors. Patients and careers considering a range of complex treatment options may find verbal, textual, video, and online review resources in addition to time allotted for questions and concerns to be of great use.

Limited awareness of clinical trails

Lack of knowledge of clinical trials and of the broader objectives of clinical research is a significant patient-related barrier to enrollment in clinical trials. According to a study of cancer patients and their loved ones, the majority said that their doctors did not bring up clinical trials as a possible course of therapy, and the majority thought that if trials were appropriate, their doctors would have advised them. In fact, just 42% of patients in the 2016 NBTS study of people with brain tumours said that their medical staff had ever told them about clinical trials. The critical significance of clinical research in enhancing care for patients with brain cancer is a message worthy of conversation with all patients regardless of stage of treatment, despite the fact that many centres do not have studies to offer patients (thus also helping dispel the myth that clinical trials are only for those with advanced disease).

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, greater knowledge alone might not be sufficient to increase the number of patients enrolled in clinical trials. The NBTS survey found that helping future brain tumour patients as well as "myself" was the top motivation for clinical trial participation. Participants in cancer patient trials frequently have this altruistic drive, especially in phase III clinical trials. Greater public awareness of the vital contribution of clinical research to improving patient outcomes as well as the overall benefits of clinical research to society is necessary.

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