



Wessex
Cancer Alliance

Prehab – patient experience

Prehab Webinar
October 2023



Some findings – Wesfit

- All participants reported physiological and psychological benefit from their experiences of exercising and/or having their fitness monitored
- Participants gained a lot from being encouraged and their progress monitored kept them motivated. The holistic support helped foster a more positive attitude towards their illness and impending surgery. As such, they felt less in need of additional emotional support.
- All participants were motivated to seek out opportunities to increase their chances of recovering well after surgery and ultimately 'surviving cancer'. Motivations included reducing their stay in hospital and increasing their chances of getting 'back to normal' as quickly as possible



Some findings – Prehab4Cancer

- The programme was highly valued by participants; the belief that participation would improve recovery seemed a major motivator for engagement
- Engager participants tended to use language which indicated that the programme was very highly valued, with some expressing gratitude or a sense of good fortune in its being available to them: “I’m so lucky to have been part of that”
- “I was a bit naïve thinking that oh yes, after they’ve taken this tumour out, I’ll be fine, I’ll be able to whatever. And if I hadn’t had done the exercises, I don’t think my recovery rate would have been as good.”
- Individuals with varied prior exercise experience, in a sample with varying socio-economic backgrounds, found the programme acceptable, beneficial and enjoyable.



Findings – Macmillan

- Prehabilitation offers people with cancer and their care givers three main benefits:
 - Personal empowerment: Fostering a sense of control and purpose in people, facilitating preparation for treatment and improving quality of life.
 - Physical and psychological resilience: An opportunity to improve physiological function and psychological wellbeing, thereby improving resilience to the effects of cancer treatments, enhancing the quality of recovery and enabling the living of life as fully as possible before, during and after treatment.
 - Long-term health: An opportunity to reflect on the role of healthy lifestyle practices following a cancer diagnosis, promote positive health behaviour change and thereby impact long-term health.



Experiences – Macmillan

- (Prehabilitation)... will arm you with scientifically researched knowledge, skills, habits and routines that can take the edge off the discomfort, give you back some control, and may enhance the effectiveness of your treatment. It will show those around you, and yourself, that you're not a victim of cancer, or a passive recipient of medical input. You're now enrolled into a whole new enterprise that you never wanted to be part of – it chose you. But now you're in the Cancer Club, being an active participant in the difficult times ahead can make your journey smoother – and Prehabilitation is the travel guide I definitely wish I'd had when I first set off...'
- “Looking back on my fitness regime if I was that fit during treatment I would have coped much better and this in turn will aid recovery not going into depression much later”



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Cancer Patient Experience Survey 2022

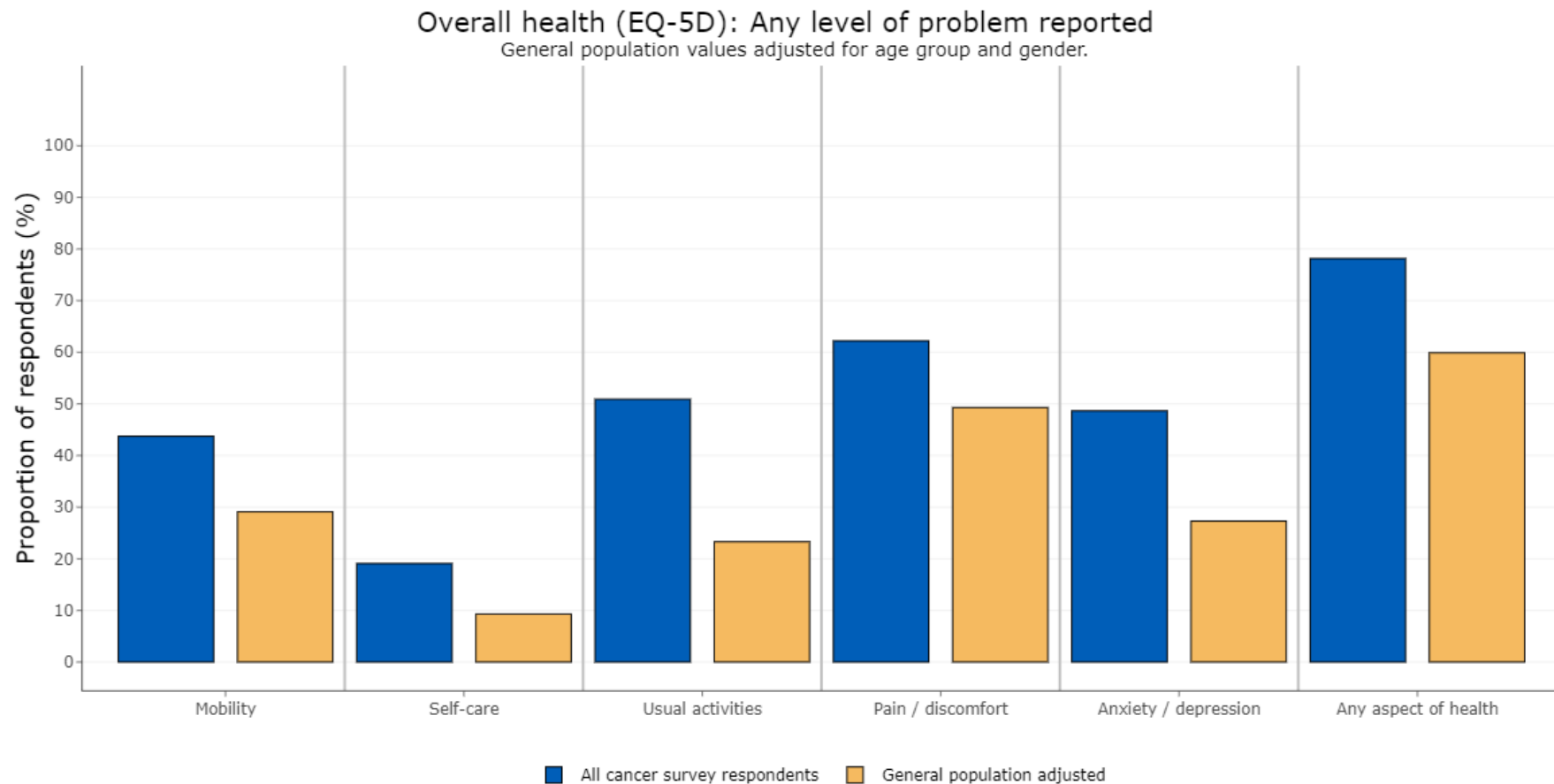
- 60% of Wessex respondents felt possible longer-term side effects were **definitely explained** in a way they could understand in advance of their treatment (Q47)
- 56% of respondents were **definitely able** to discuss options for managing the impact of any long term side effects (Q48)
- *"I would have liked more information on possible long-term side effects from my surgery & radiotherapy as I have been experiencing pain, soreness, numbness seven months after surgery and have been told this is normal, as well as breathlessness after radiotherapy and was never told this could continue long-term."*
- *There needs to be a lot more information on this as given on the NHS website provided to the patient. If I was given that info in my literature to read I would have prevented my ongoing problems which are affecting my quality of life."*

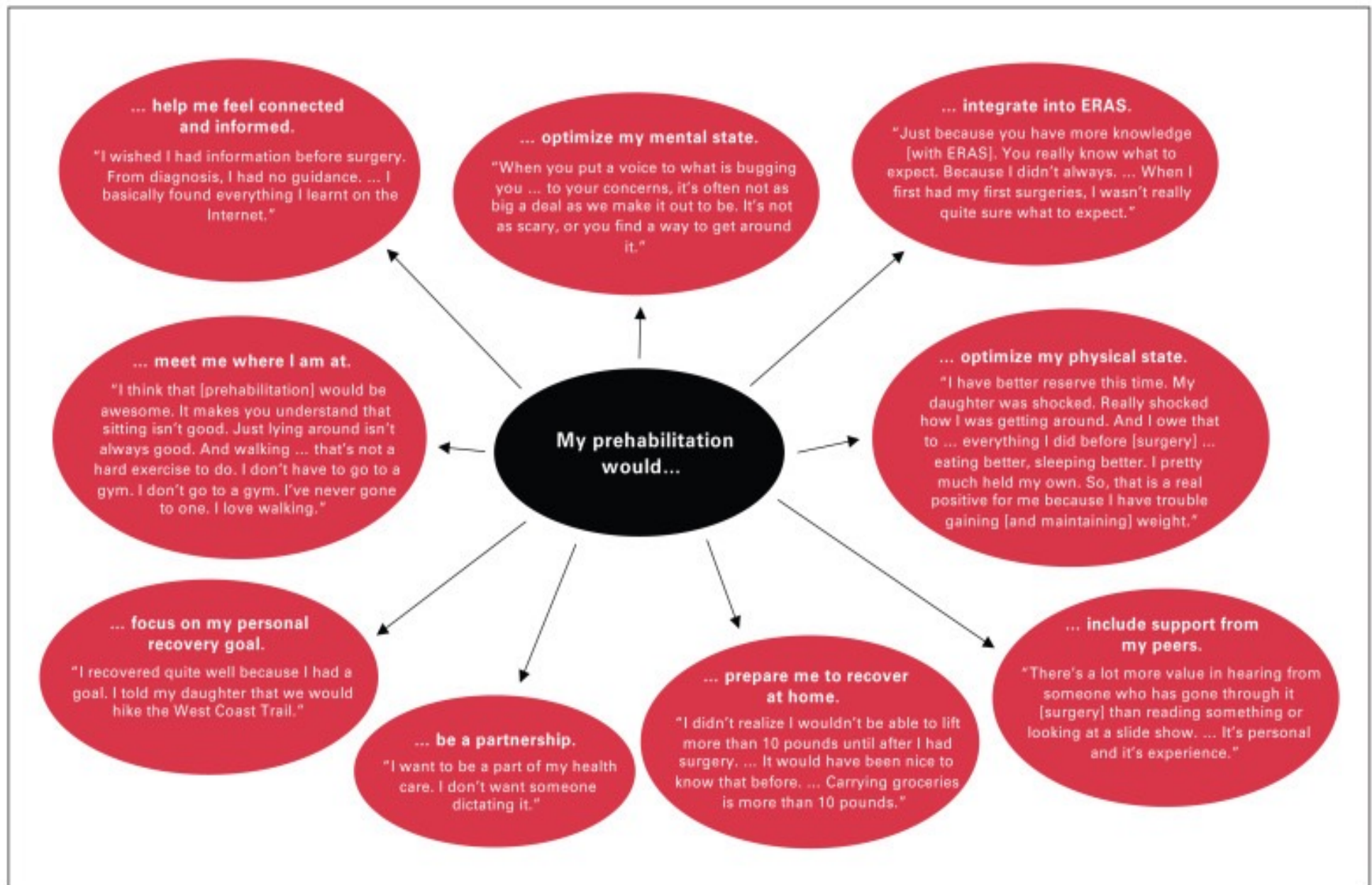




Quality of Life Survey

- Nationally, cancer Quality of Life Survey respondents report a lower health summary score than the general population (73.9 versus 90.1)







What kind of advice would you have liked before your treatment began?

- I wanted to know if I could exercise during chemo
- I did get some advice on prehab. It was good to have things that I could do whilst waiting for treatment rather than just feeling helpless
- Preparation to support feeling more in control
- Some advice on what foods to eat would have helped me
- I felt it was key to try to get as fit as possible for my operation. I decided to exercise as much as possible between chemo and surgery
- My cancer journey has lasted 48 years but at no time was I ever given any guidance about what the emotional/psychological impact would be



The last word....

"I think when you get that diagnosis you are left floundering and with prehab the support you get gives you focus and a little bit of control back in your life"

"I said, 'well [partner], we have done absolutely everything we could to help the outcome of this'. And that was very comforting, to feel that, I couldn't have done anything more'. And I got a good result, out within 10 days. And that was really good for me, emotionally"

"I was told I'd be in hospital for two, three or four weeks. Well, I was out within nine days. I couldn't believe it. All this is down to the fitness regime - it's been marvellous. If someone had told me in February... that I would be going to the gym, I'd have laughed at them"



References:

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