We examined functional outcomes and quality of life of whole brain radiotherapy (WBRT) with integrated fractionated stereotactic radiotherapy boost (FSRT) for brain metastases treatment. Methods Eighty seven people with 1-3 brain metastases were enrolled on this phase II trial of WBRT (30Gy/10) + simultaneous FSRT, (60Gy/10). Results Mean (Min-Max) baseline KPS, Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE) and FACT-BR quality of life were 83 (70-100), 28 (21-30) and 143 (98-153). Lower baseline MMSE (but not KPS or FACT-BR) was associated with worse survival after adjusting for age, number of metastases, primary and extra-cranial disease status. Crude rates of deterioration (>10 points decrease from baseline for KPS and FACT-BR, MMSE fall to <27) ranged from 26-38% for KPS, 32-59% for FACT-Br and 0-16% for MMSE depending on the time-point assessed with higher rates generally noted at earlier time points (<6 months post-treatment). Using a linear mixed models analysis, significant declines from baseline were noted for KPS and FACT-Br (largest effects at 6 weeks to 3 months) with no significant change in MMSE. Conclusions The effects on function and quality of life of this integrated treatment of WBRT + simultaneous FSRT were similar to other published series combining WBRT+SRS.

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A Mixed Method Study of a Peer Support Intervention for Newly Diagnosed Primary Brain Tumour Patients

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an intervention designed to support newly diagnosed primary brain tumour patients. The intervention involved a structured, one time meeting between newly diagnosed patients and trained volunteer “veteran” primary brain tumour patients. Methods Two trained volunteers met for a single, face to face meeting on an individual basis with a total of 10 newly diagnosed patients. A combination of questionnaires and interviews were used to investigate the impact of the intervention for the new patients and the volunteers. Results: The intervention appeared to be of substantial value for both groups of participants. Analysis revealed that the newly diagnosed patients experienced a range of benefits, including those related to the themes of: increased hope; valued guidance; hearing what it’s really like; overcoming aloneness; and realignment of priorities. Veteran patients experienced a sense of accomplishment and decreased anxiety as a result of the intervention. Only minor adverse effects and challenges were reported. Conclusions The findings provide initial evidence that the experimental intervention...