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A microsimulation model to assess the impact of SARS-CoV-2 on cancer outcomes, healthcare organization and economic burden

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Background: SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has deeply modified healthcare seeking and services in Europe since February 2020 with delays in treatment delivery and changes in the hospital data, show a 2.25% increase of the 5-CRC (CC) has to minimize virus exposure in cancer patients (pts). Real-time assessment of the impact on cancer outcomes can optimize decision-making for future epidemic episodes.

Methods: A discrete-event simulation (DES) model was developed to model individual pt pathways during the pandemic in a context of constrained medical resources. Cancer pt care is modeled based on pandemic-adapted guidelines for medical practice. Pts flow is derived from medical-administrative databases using time series methods to estimate the proportion of punctual / late visits and associated delay and to extrapolate future flows. Finally, the impact of modified care on survival is estimated using literature data.

Results: From March to December 2020, based on data from Gustave Roussy CC in France (n= 4877 included pts), estimated overall treatment delay is <= 7 days in 86.6% of pts and 5.2% of pts have a delay higher than 2 months. More than 94% of this duration is delay in pt request for care, causing 59 pts to suffer a major prognosis change. Identified pt flows result in roughly time-variable usage of resources, with important queues forecast for surgery care and chemotherapy. The handling of such queues will require intensified healthcare professionals effort. Projections show that, in the best-case scenario, i.e without a 2nd pandemic wave, treatment delays and modifications will result in around 49 additional 5-year cancer specific deaths (+ 2.25% of 5-year deaths), mainly in liver, sarcoma and head and neck cancer pts.

Conclusions: In a resource-constrained context, optimization of the benefit-risk ratio between COVID-19 and cancer care is key. Simulations of individual projections from actual hospital data, show a 2.25% increase of the 5-CRC (CC) has to minimize virus exposure in cancer patients (pts). Real-time assessment of the impact on cancer outcomes can optimize decision-making for future epidemic episodes.

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Dutch oncology COVID-19 Consortium (DOCC): Outcome of COVID-19 in patients with cancer in a nationwide cohort study

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Background: The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is having significant impact on oncological care (Joude et al, Eur J Cancer 2020;136:132-139) and patients with cancer might have an increased risk for severe outcome of COVID-19. In order to identify risk factors associated with a worse outcome of COVID-19, a nationwide registry was developed for patients with cancer and COVID-19.

Methods: This ongoing multicentre nationwide observational cohort study was designed as a quality of care registry and is executed by the Dutch Oncology COVID-19 Consortium (DOCC), a collaboration of oncology physicians in the Netherlands. A questionnaire was developed to collect pseudonymised patient data on patients’ characteristics, cancer diagnosis, cancer treatment, and outcome of COVID-19. All patients with COVID-19 and a cancer diagnosis or cancer treatment in the past 5 years were eligible for inclusion.

Results: To date, > 600 cancer patients diagnosed with COVID-19 have been registered by 45 Dutch hospitals. Data of 442 registered patients with at least 4 weeks follow-up were cleaned and 351 patients could be included for the first analyses. The main cancer diagnoses were non-small cell lung cancer (13.4%), breast cancer (13.4%), and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (8.8%). Overall, 114 (32.3%) out of 351 patients with cancer died from COVID-19. In multivariate analyses, age ≥ 65 years (p < 0.001), male gender (p = 0.035), prior or other malignancy (p = 0.045), and active diagnosis of haematological malignancy (p = 0.046) or lung cancer (p = 0.03) were independent risk factors for a fatal outcome of COVID-19. In a subgroup analysis of patients with active malignancy, the risk for a fatal outcome was mainly determined by tumour type (haematological malignancy or lung cancer) and age (≥ 65 years).

Conclusions: The findings in this registry indicate that patients with a haematological malignancy or lung cancer have an increased risk of a worse outcome of COVID-19. These findings are ongoing. COVID-19 pandemic these vulnerable patients should avoid exposure to SARS-CoV-2, whereas treatment adjustments and prioritization vaccine, when available, should also be considered.

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