



Tablet computers as a means to support patients undergoing radiotherapy treatment



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Problem

- Daily contact with staff, but there is little time during these quick in-and-out sessions
- A paper-based questionnaire shows that many patients feel that they do not have enough information about their disease, treatment and possible side effects.





Aim

This study aims to explore breast cancer patients' experience of using a tablet computer during their course of curative radiotherapy treatment





Material

- iPad 2
- Illness, treatment and clinic specific information
- Videos demonstrating the treatment procedure
- Questionnaires
- FAQ and discussion forum
- Notes and Calendar
- Usual applications





Method

- Convenience sample
- Eight women with breast cancer borrowed an iPad during course of treatment
- Data were collected after the intervention by using individual interviews (n=6)
- Content analysis method





Results

- Five women used the iPad regularly
- Easy to use
- Information was easy to understand
- Content and functions was valuable, videos most appreciate
- A more comprehensive knowledge
- Questionnaires with the thumbs up/thumbs down feature





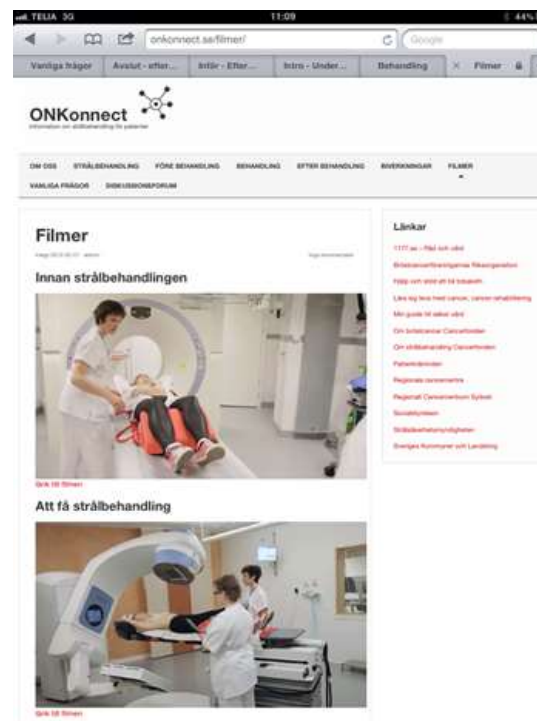
To be prepared

“To be able to go home and in peace and quiet, sit down and look through what I am about to experience, what will happen? You not get that nervous, I was quite calm when I went back for the radiotherapy treatment”.



Familiarity

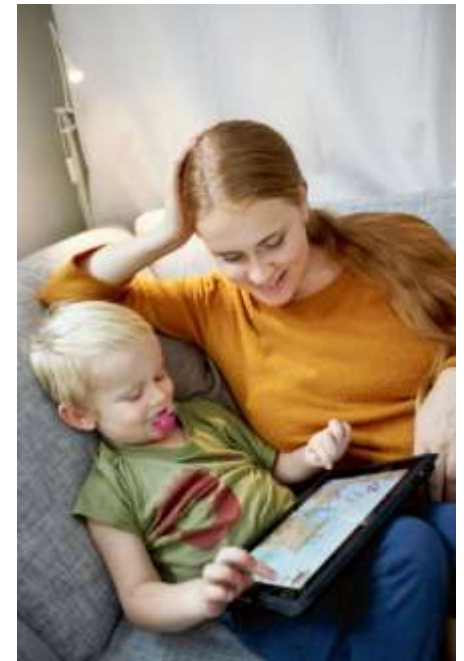
I felt safe when I came to the radiotherapy. I knew what would happen. I knew how it looked, I did not have any fantasies. I knew how these machines looked like.., and I knew more or less what we would talk about. It felt very safe and well, yes I did."





Informed relatives

“My family thought it was very interesting and my kids especially. They are 12 and 17 years, and radiotherapy treatment is very foreign ... especially for one of them, he does not like hospitals at all so it was very good for him to get a look at the iPad and get to know a bit anyway”





Accessing the information throughout the care process

"During the chemotherapy, it was so much thoughts..., I do not know if it was that I forgot the information I had received..., because there is so much side effects, and they do not occur all at once..., then I had been able to use it [the iPad]"





Conclusions

- Better informed and prepared – a sense of control
- Familiar – more confidence and less anxious
- Better involved patients
- Better informed and involved relatives
- Knowledge increase – empowerment increase
- More content and function are needed





The project team

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