

Background: Many health professionals working with teenage and young cancer patients (TYA-HPs) do not provide advice on physical activity, dietary intake, smoking cessation, and alcohol consumption as part of routine cancer care.

Objective: To understand TYA-HPs' perspectives on the provision of health behavior advice and preferences on an intervention to help develop their health promotion skills.

Methods: In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 26 TYA-HPs (12 nurses, 8 clinicians, and 6 allied health professionals) whose average time working with TYA cancer patients was 8 years. Each interview followed the same semi-structured guide which was based upon constructs (capability, physical opportunity, social opportunity, reflective motivation and automatic motivation) of the COM-B model of behavior change. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using Framework analysis.

Results: Overall, TYA-HPs recognized the value and importance of promoting health behaviors but felt their capability to provide health behavior advice was limited by availability of, and access to, good quality evidence linking health behavior to cancer outcomes. TYA-HPs expressed confusion over professional responsibility to provide advice and how best to support young people with cancer to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Conclusions: TYA-HPs recognize health behavior promotion to be a core part of TYA cancer care but feel ill-equipped to provide such advice to patients.

Implications for practice: Mapped to constructs of the COM-B model of behaviour these findings suggest that TYA-HPs would benefit from cross multidisciplinary team support for improved access to TYA specific resources covering key health behaviours and skills-based training on delivering lifestyle advice.

Key Words: Adolescent; Cancer: Health Professional; Continued Professional Development