

THE IMPACT OF A COMMUNAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM ON LIMB SALVAGE IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous challenges hindering limb salvage for musculoskeletal tumours in low to medium income countries. Communal tumour boards through networking could be a viable option for effective management of musculoskeletal tumours. This study highlights the development of an integrated care pathway for patients with musculoskeletal tumours via multi institutional networking in the Lagos metropolis.

METHODOLOGY

Patients from different institutions in the Lagos metropolis were included for discussion at monthly meetings, under the aegis of the Lagos Musculoskeletal Oncology Network [LAMON]. The meetings ensured adherence as much as possible to agreed national and international guide lines in the management of musculoskeletal tumours. Decisions about surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and timing of the modalities, were planned at the meetings.

RESULTS

The network extended to 26 volunteer specialists within the city. In the first 30 months, 212 patients were reviewed, of whom 192 (91%) patients had definitive histological diagnoses. The age range of the patients was 3-95 years. Limb salvage was achievable in 142 (67%) patients with a local recurrence rate of 8.5 %. The common histological diagnoses include osteosarcoma 22%, giant cell tumour 13%, soft tissue sarcoma 11%, and metastatic bone disease 8%.

DISCUSSION

The network resulted in improvement in diagnosis, limb salvage rate and follow up care for musculoskeletal tumours. Perhaps, with appropriate social and corporate support,

communal tumour boards like LAMON may translate into model for multidisciplinary cancer care in resource poor environment like the west-African sub-region.