



THE COMBAT PROJECT

Core post operative morbidity set for paediatric brain tumours

Information sheet for healthcare professional/researcher – consensus process

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What is The COMBAT Project?

Post operative morbidity can occur after brain tumour surgery in children. The COMBAT Project aims to improve how these are reported in research and clinical care.

Why is this project needed?

Brain tumours are one of the most common types of tumours in children. They are associated with high morbidity or 'unwanted outcomes' both from the tumour and the medical and surgical interventions used to treat them. Surgery is usually the first line treatment.

Pre-operative morbidity and neurology, pathology and anatomical location dictate aggressiveness of surgical intent and the level of post operative morbidity which is acceptable to achieve adequate disease control.

There are a variety of morbidity scoring systems that are currently used to report surgical harms but their application in post operative paediatric brain tumour patients has proven inadequate. In addition, patient reported outcomes are poorly reported in surgical neuro oncology. Currently there is no common way to measure and report the harms following surgery, which makes it difficult to compare different research and clinical services. There is a clear need to standardise the way these adverse outcomes are reported.

The COMBAT Project will help us do this by agreeing which unwanted outcomes that studies must always report. This is called a "Core Outcome Set". You can watch a short video explaining this on the study website.

Future research and clinical studies will measure and report these agreed outcomes. By doing this, we can improve the way we find out which treatments are best for children with brain tumours.

Why have you asked me to take part?

We have invited you to take part because you have had experience treating children with brain tumours. Your experiences are really important. We want to know what unwanted outcomes were important following their surgery. We are looking specifically at unwanted outcomes as a consequence of their operation rather than those associated with adjuvant treatments.

We have made a list of possible unwanted outcomes of surgery. We would like you to look at these and tell us which ones are the most important. The most important unwanted outcomes are the ones that future research will always report.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to take part we will send you a link and instructions on how to do the survey. It will be online, you will need access to the internet through a phone, tablet or computer. There will be two surveys to complete in total. We expect each to take no more than 30 minutes.

We will ask you to fill in some information about yourself. We will also ask you complete a consent form to confirm that you are happy to take part.

The survey will be a list of unwanted outcomes and we will ask you to tell us how important it is to always measure and report each unwanted outcome. We will give you full instructions on how to complete the survey. If you need help or have questions you can contact us, and we can arrange a time to call you.

Several different groups will take the survey. This includes children and young people who had the surgery as well as their carers, health professionals and researchers. Your individual results will be confidential.

Survey 1

The survey will show a list of unwanted outcomes. We will ask you to tell us how important you think it is to always measure and report each unwanted outcome.

We will keep survey 1 open for 4 weeks after sending you the invite. If you haven't completed the survey we will send you reminders by email.

At the end of survey 1 we will analyse everyone's responses. This usually takes a few weeks. When we've done this we will send you an invitation to survey 2.

Survey 2

We will show you a chart in survey 2. It will have the ratings for each group that took part. We will also show you your rating from survey 1. Only you will be able to see your individual rating. No one else will be able to see anyone else individual score.

We will ask you to consider the information from others and to rate how important each unwanted outcome is again. You can change your rating or keep it the same. Your individual results will be confidential.

Survey 2 will be kept open for 4 weeks. At the end of survey 2 we will analyse the results. We will share and agree these results at a final meeting. In survey 2 you will be able to tell us if you would like to attend this meeting or not.

If you need help to complete the surveys or have questions you can contact us, and we can arrange a time to call you.

It is important to complete both surveys even though they are similar. By completing both you will help us to reach agreement on the most important unwanted outcomes to report.

What happens after the survey?

At the end of the second survey we will analyse the results. Then we will invite a group of children/young people who have had a brain tumour, their carers, health professionals and researchers to a meeting. This meeting will be online. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the results and agree the final core outcome set.

It won't be possible for everyone who completes the surveys to attend the meeting. If you would like to attend, you can tell us by answering a question at the end of survey 2. If you say you would like to take part we will send you more information about the meeting.

We will keep you up to date with how the project is going through project summary sheets.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is entirely up to you if you want to take part, but we would value your experienced contribution to our research.

If you do not want to take part, choose the 'I/my child DO NOT want to take part in the survey' option on expression of interest form. We will not contact you again.

Will my data be kept confidential?

We will need to use information from you for this research project.

This information will include your name and contact details, as well as details about where you work, your role and years of experience. People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead.

The program we use to do the survey automatically collects your computer or device's IP address. An IP address is a unique number for your computer or device, like a digital home address. We will not routinely use this information in our research. We only need to check it if we think someone is submitting the survey more than once, as this can affect our results.

Alder Hey Children's Hospital is the sponsor of this research and is responsible for looking after your information. We will keep all information about you safe and secure by following all privacy rules. The study's information will be stored on password-protected files. They will be on a secure University of Liverpool network. It will not be accessible to anyone apart from the study team. Any quotes we use will be anonymous and you will not be able to be identified from them.

Once we have finished the study we will keep some of the data for at least 10 years after the study on a secure network. This may be longer if the data has historical value. All the data stored will only have the code number attached to it - any identifying data will be destroyed. This follows Alder Hey Children's Hospital and University of Liverpool guidelines. After this time it will be destroyed. Your data will not be shared outside the UK.

What if I change my mind?

You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.

You have the right to ask us to remove, change or delete data we hold about you for the purposes of the study. We might not always be able to do this if it means we cannot use your data to do the research. If so, we will tell you why we cannot do this.

If you do want to stop being part of the study, then any anonymous data until your withdrawal will be kept in the study. This is because it will be difficult to separate from other data.

Are there any risks in taking part?

We do not expect any major risks of taking part. Sometimes talking about your experiences can be upsetting. You can take break or stop taking part at any time. You can also feedback to us on any concerns about the survey.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

There are no direct benefits of taking part but we hope you will enjoy participating. Taking part will help improve how we do research. In the future, it will also help improve the care offered to children with brain tumours.

Will I get paid for taking part?

This is a volunteer opportunity and your participation is greatly appreciated. We can't offer payment but we hope you will enjoy taking part in this study.

Who is running the study?

Doctors and researchers at the University of Liverpool, Alder Hey Children's Hospital and The Walton Centre are running this study. Dr Sandhya Trichinopoly Krishna is leading this project. She is a doctor at Alder Hey Children's Hospital. She is doing this project for her PhD at the University of Liverpool.

If you have any concerns about the study please contact the study team – alternatively you can contact the research sponsor at research@alderhey.nhs.uk or Alder Hey PALS department at PALS@alderhey.nhs.uk.

Next steps

If you would like to take part, please fill in the following expression of interest form:

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/liverpool/expression-of-interest-form-survey>

If you do not want to take part or be contacted by us then please choose the 'I/my child DO NOT want to take part in the survey' option on the form.

We will contact you if you have indicated you would like us to call you to answer any questions.

If you have said you would like to take part we will email you details about how to fill in the survey. You will be asked to complete a consent form at the start of the survey stating you are happy to participate.

Additional information

The study website can be found at www.thecombatproject.org

It contains videos and further information about the project.

The study team can be contacted through this email address: thecombatproject@alderhey.nhs.uk

Please use the above address for more information or support with the survey, or to report any problems with it.

If you have more questions about how we use your data you can contact the study team, or the Research Sponsor Data Protection Officer at dpo@alderhey.nhs.uk.

You can find out more about how we use your information from:

<https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/>

There is an animated video on youtube about how we use your information:

What is GDPR - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VII6V1MgZgY>