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What do people living with and surviving lung cancer want and need from the Recovery Package?

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Introduction: The National Cancer Survivorship Initiative (NCSI 2013) identified the Recovery Package as a key outcome for people living with and beyond cancer. However, little is known about whether it meets the needs of people with lung cancer and the aim of the research was to examine the experience during diagnosis, treatment and recovery.

Methods: The research was a single site, mixed methods study. It included a survey and interviews of patients who had survived a minimum of two years following a diagnosis of lung cancer. 125 potential patients were identified who had had surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy, or still receiving active treatment. Of these 100 were eligible, questionnaires were sent, inviting participants to indicate if they were willing to participate in an interview. From the 34 respondents, 17 agreed to an interview, of which 14 were able to participate and included a carer or relative at 10 of the interviews.

Results: The mixed methods study has generated findings that indicate what the ongoing support and care needs are for people living with and beyond lung cancer. It identified a mixed response from the understanding and the experience of the four components of the Recovery Package. The participants indicated priorities for their recovery including a dedicated rehabilitation programme, increased physical activity, management of side effects including pain and weight management and financial support.

Conclusion: The four components of the Recovery Package need to be managed and maintained by all health care professionals involved. Patients and carers need to be aware of what is available locally and nationally to enhance their recovery and quality of life. A shared treatment plan and a dedicated rehabilitation programme to promote the enhanced physical recovery and to address psycho-social needs of people living with lung cancer is required.