



Mater Newcastle

Telephone Follow-up after High Dose Rate Brachytherapy for Gynaecological Cancers

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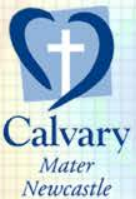
27TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING
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Department of Radiation Oncology
Calvary Mater Newcastle



Introduction

- The Calvary Mater Newcastle (CMN) is the only New South Wales (NSW) Radiation Oncology Treatment Centre (ROTC) outside of Sydney metropolitan area offering High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy (BT) for the management of gynaecological cancers.



Introduction continued

LHD Maps

Local health districts and specialty networks

LHD Boards

Central Coast

Far West

Hunter New England

Illawarra Shoalhaven

Mid North Coast

Murrumbidgee

Nepean Blue Mountains

Northern NSW

Northern Sydney

South Eastern Sydney

South Western Sydney

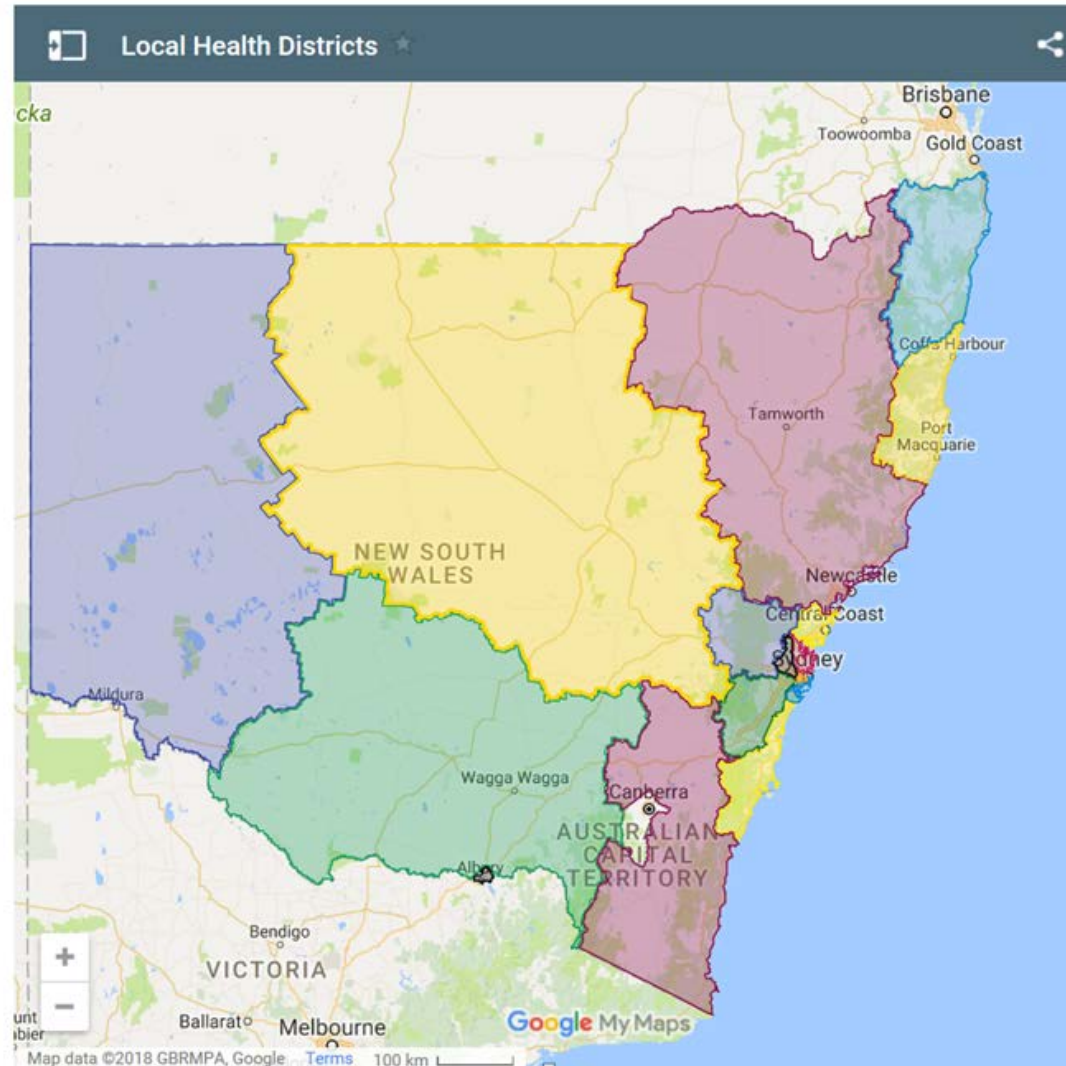
Southern NSW

Sydney

Western NSW

Western Sydney

LHD Maps



Background and Purpose

- In 2016, 50% of the patients referred to the CMN were from local area and 50% were from regional NSW centres.
- Local patients are followed up by CMN's Radiation Oncologist (RO) and/or the patient's Gynaecology Oncologist (GO)
- The regional patients are usually follow-up by their local Gynaecologist.
- It was noted that many of the CMN patients were being lost to follow-up.

Background and Purpose

- In 2014, a telephone follow-up study was designed to allow a Brachytherapy Radiation Therapist (RT) to follow up these patients by telephone, complimenting the follow-up that was already being received and to collect patient reported toxicity data.
- In 2015, ethics approval was received.

Methodology

- All patients receiving HDR Brachy for the management gynaecological cancers:
 - Endometrial, cervical and vaginal
- Patients received a letter outlining:
 - Purpose of the study
 - Frequency of contact (every three months)
 - Copy of the questions that would be asked.

Methodology continued

- The questions were based on:
 - LENT/SOMA Patient Questionnaire
 - Toxicity grading of late effects
 - EORTC QLQ-C30
 - CTAE grading
- All data was recorded in Microsoft Excel® and an electronic medical record (VARIAN ARIA®).
- Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet was created containing the Patient's name and contact number, the date they would need to be contacted on at 6 weeks post treatment and every 3 months after for 5 years.
- Brachy RT contacted patients every 3 months by telephone and completed a toxicity questionnaire
- Follow-up of these patients will continue for 5 years with annual evaluation of the results.

Results

In 2015:

- 51 patients received brachy
 - 30 (59%) Hunter New England LHD
 - 21(41%) were from regional centres
- 50 patients consented to the study
 - 8 with cervix primary
 - 42 with endometrial primary
 - 31 (62%) were able to be contacted by telephone
 - 19(28%) patients were uncontactable.

Results continued

- Not all 31 patients could be contacted at each 3-month time point.
- Most of responses (100%) were collected at 6 months.

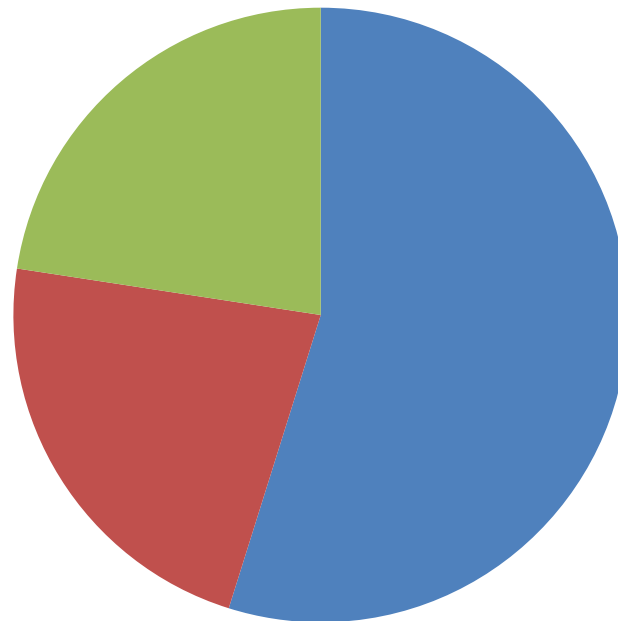
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

1. Did you pass urine more frequently than usual?

Responses (n=31)



- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

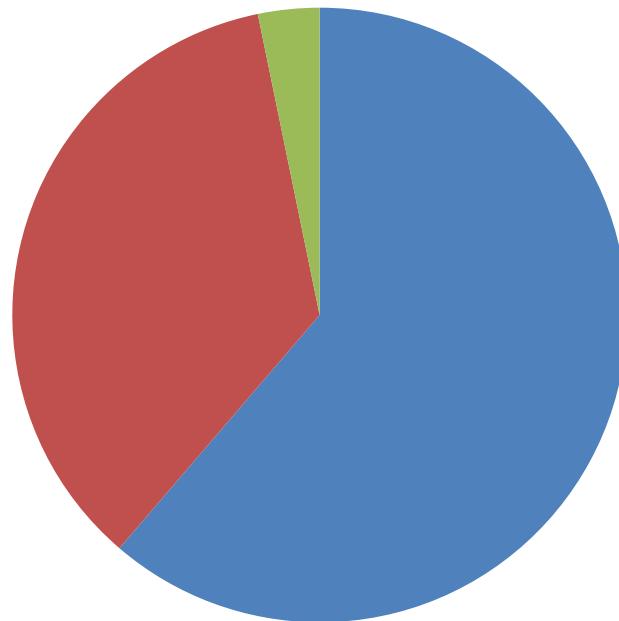
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

2. Have you been leaking urine?

Responses (n=31)



- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

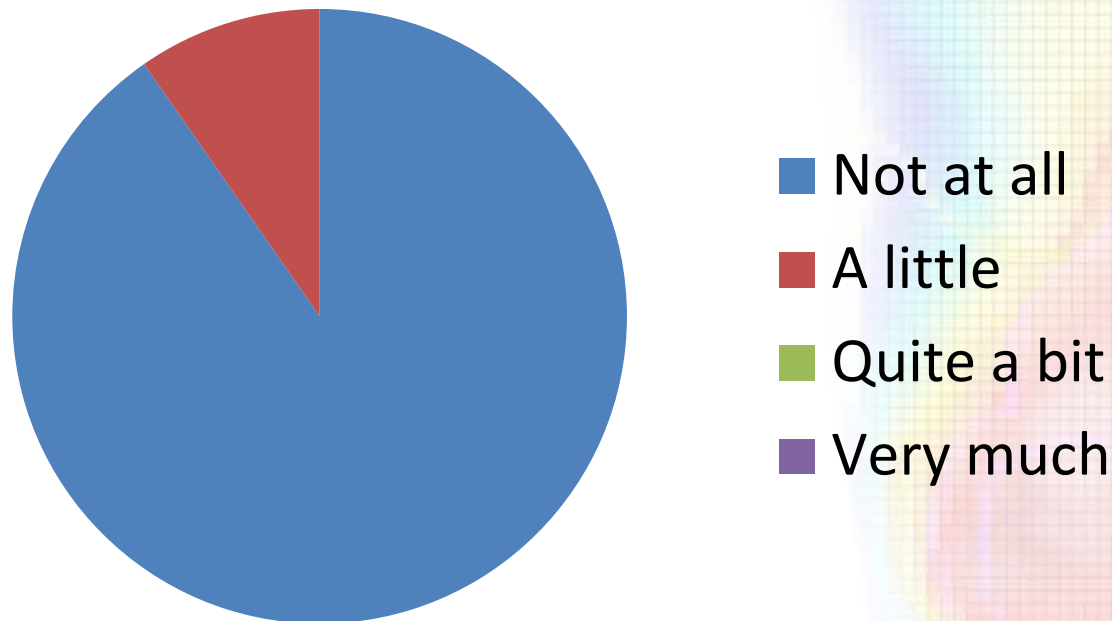
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

3. Have you had pain/ burning when urinating?

Responses (n=31)



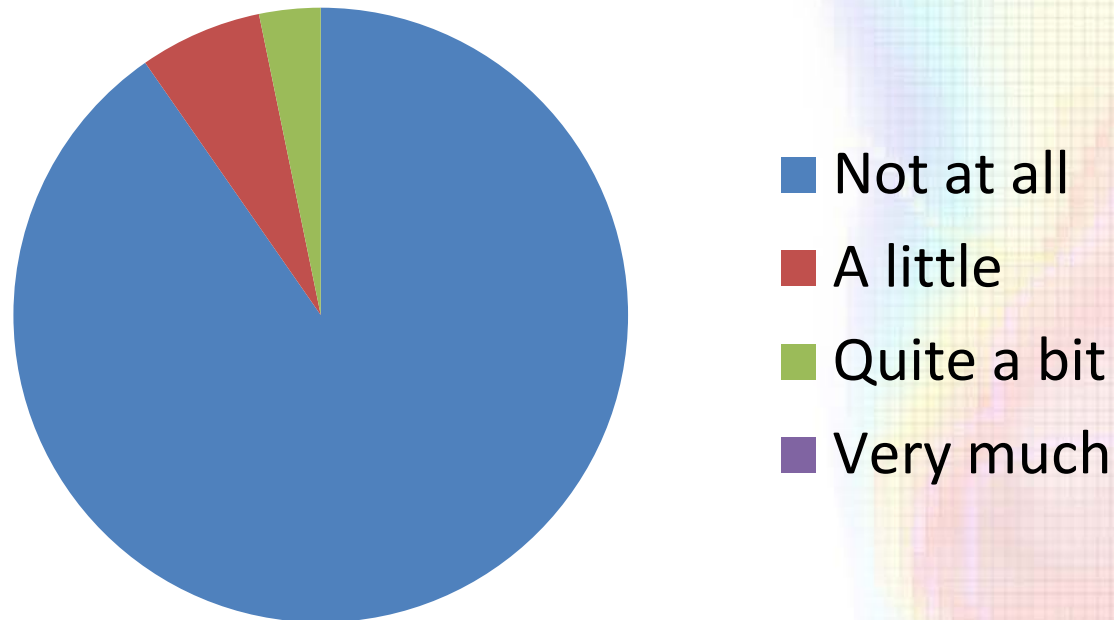
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

4. Have you had swelling from one or both of your legs?

Responses (n=31)

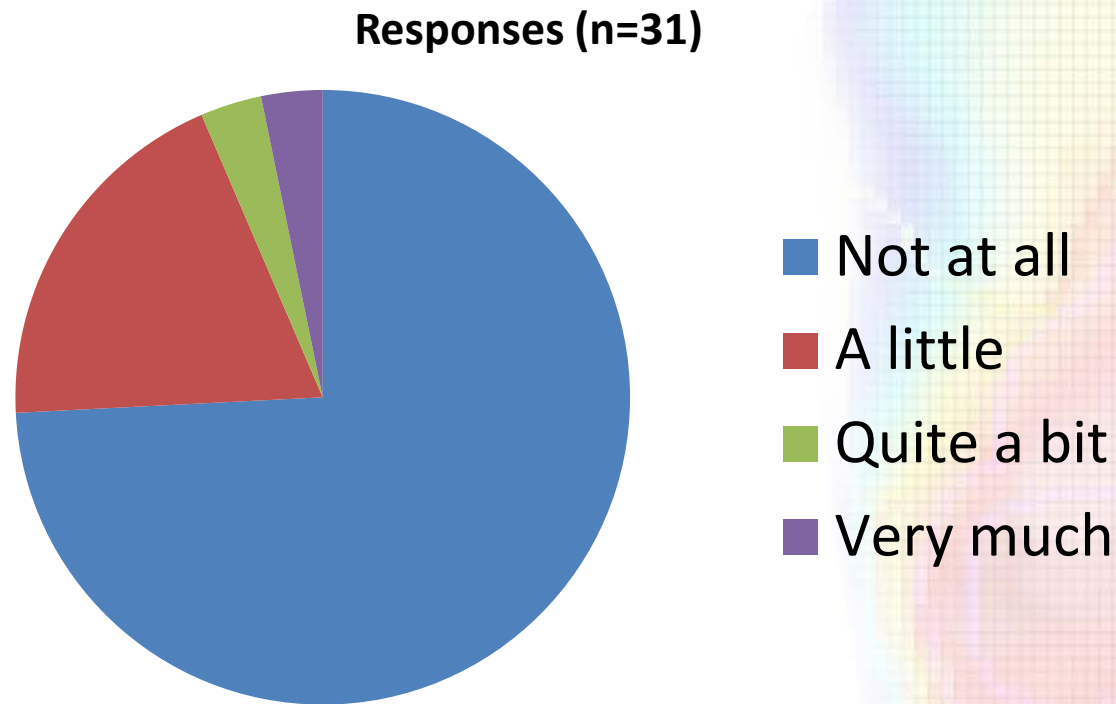


Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

5. Have you had irritation or soreness in your vagina/vulva?



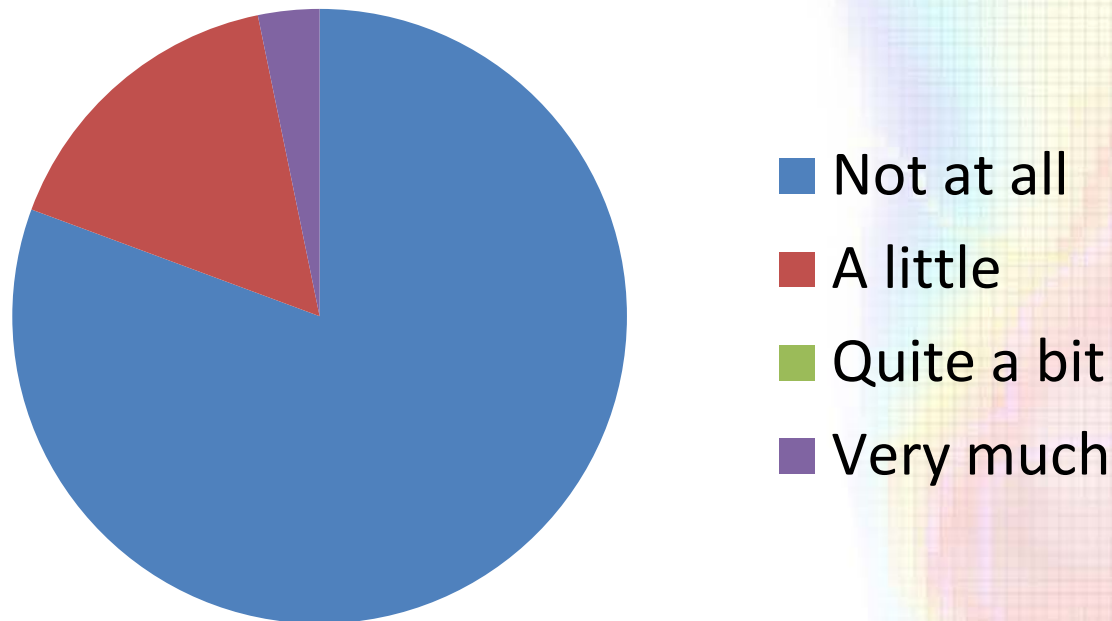
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

6. Have you had discharge from your vagina?

Responses (n=31)



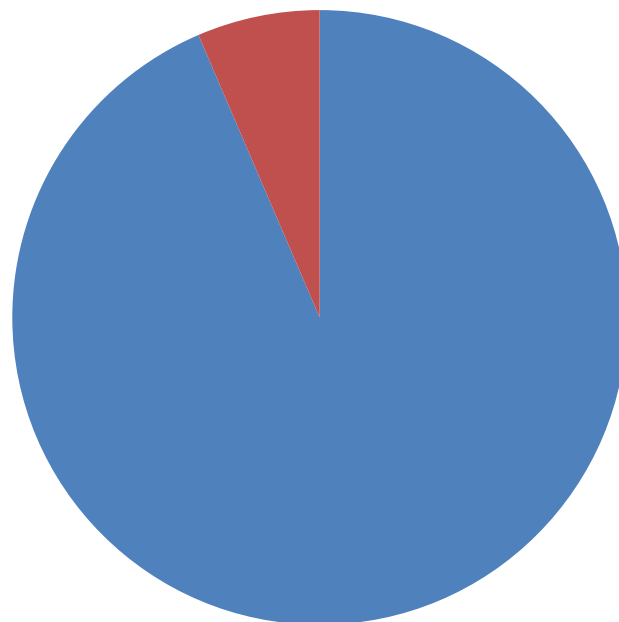
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

7. Have you had unusual bleeding from your vagina?

Responses (n=31)



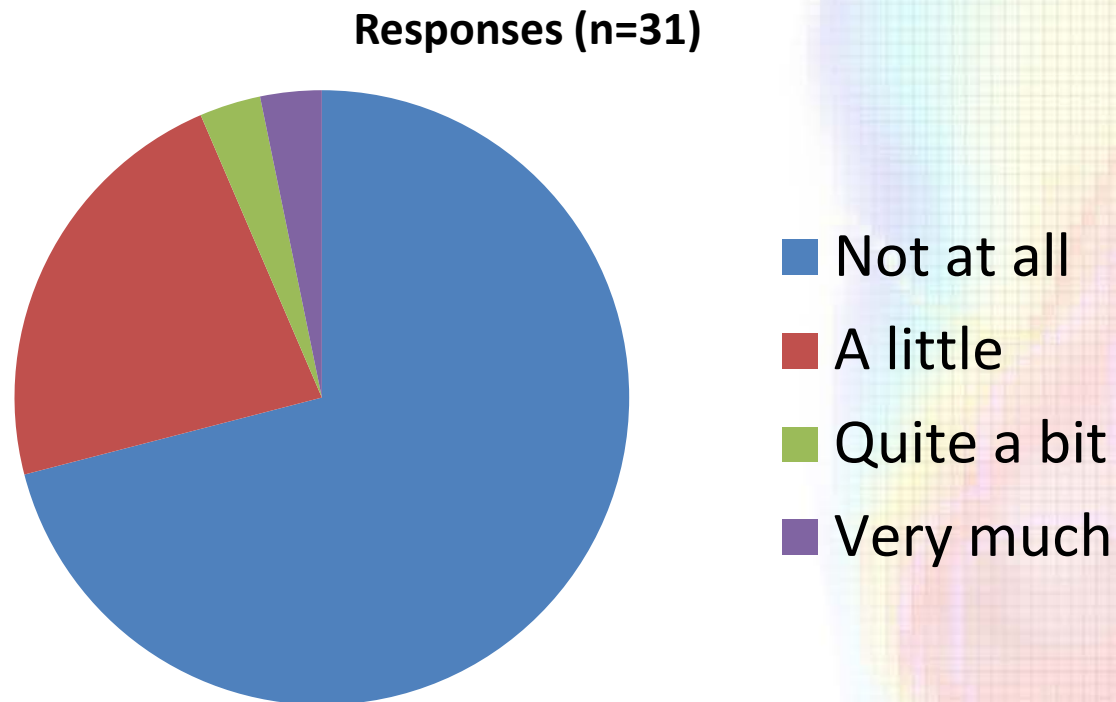
- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

8. Have you had diarrhoea recently?



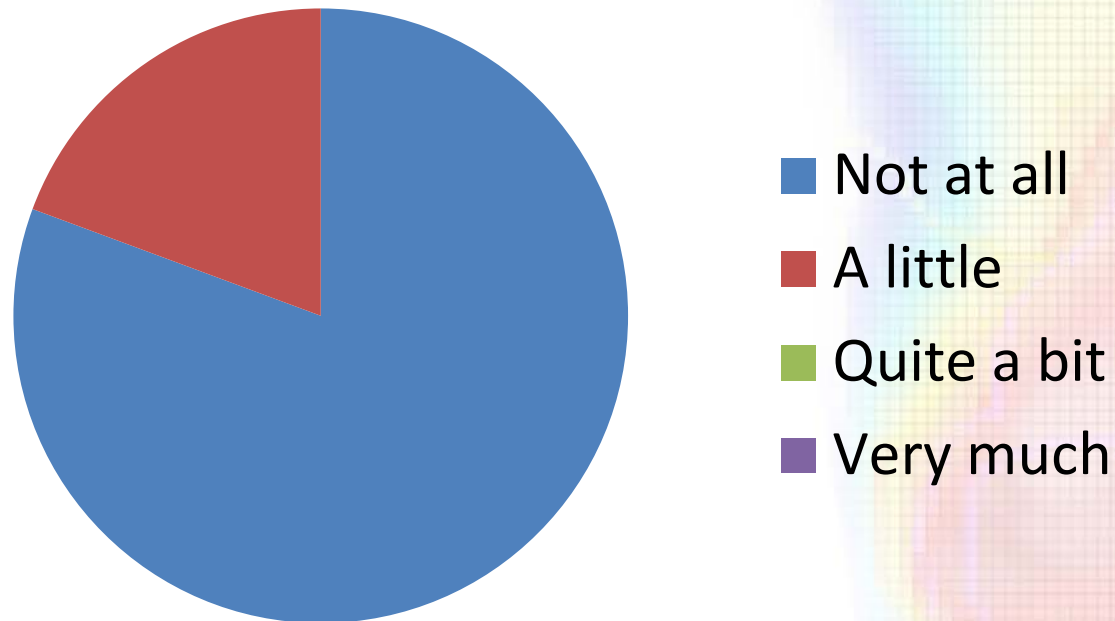
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

9. Have you had difficulty controlling your bowels?

Responses (n=31)



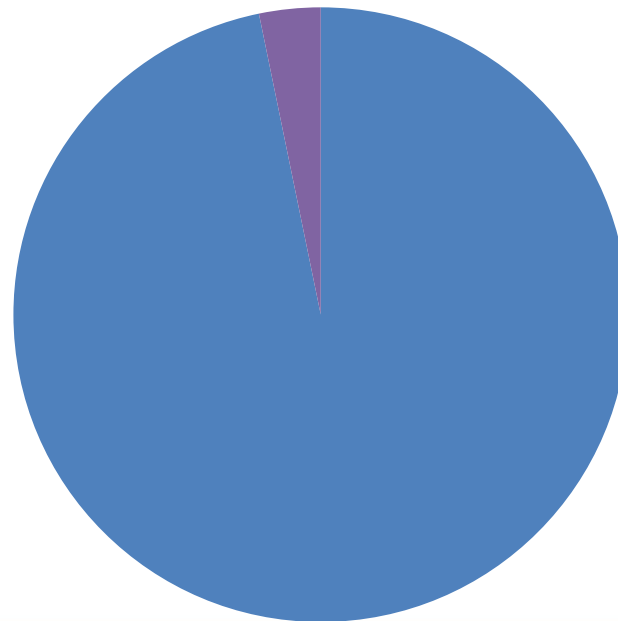
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the past week:

10. Have you had any bleeding recently when you have opened your bowels?

Responses (n=31)



- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

11. Have you been sexually active?

100% responded “No”

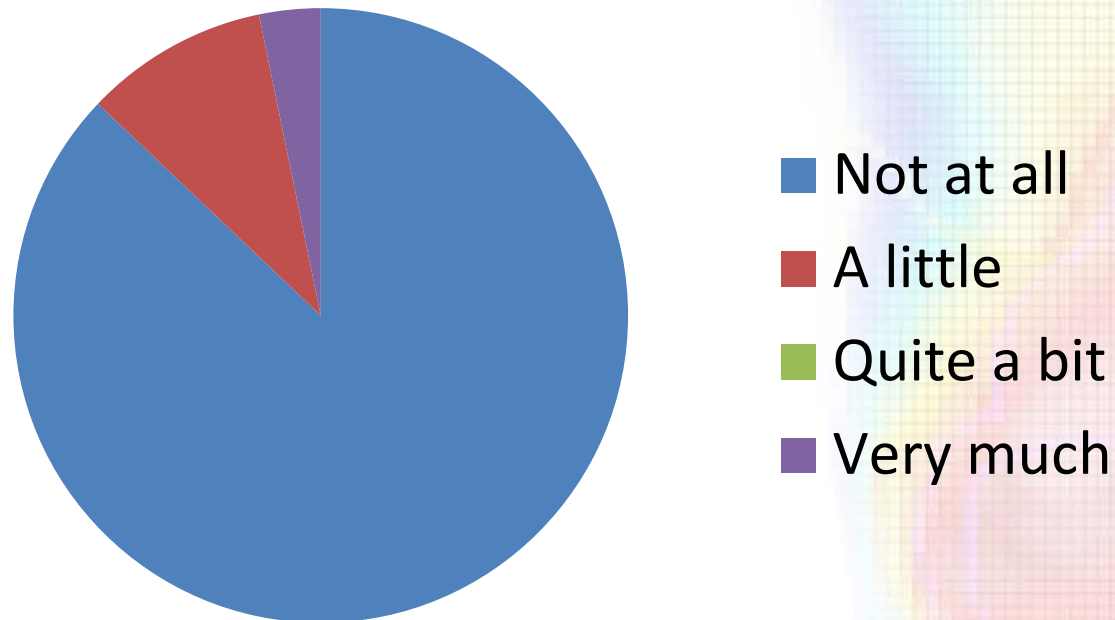
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

12. Have you been worried sex would be painful?

Responses (n=31)



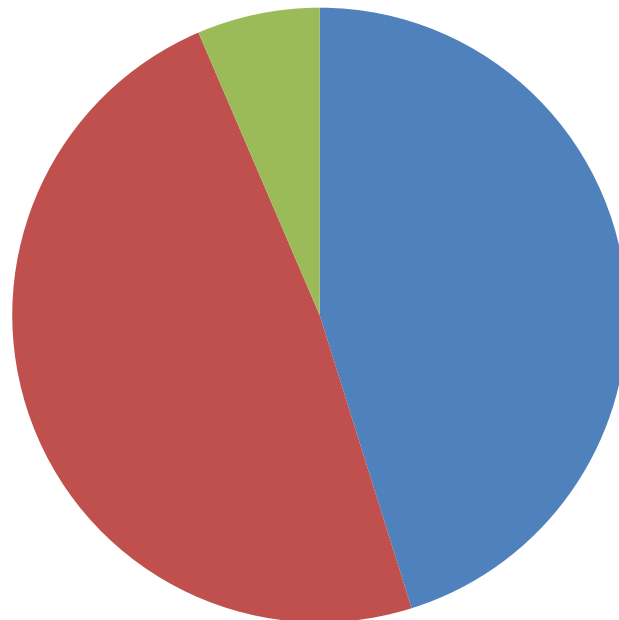
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

13. Have you been using the dilators?

Responses (n=31)



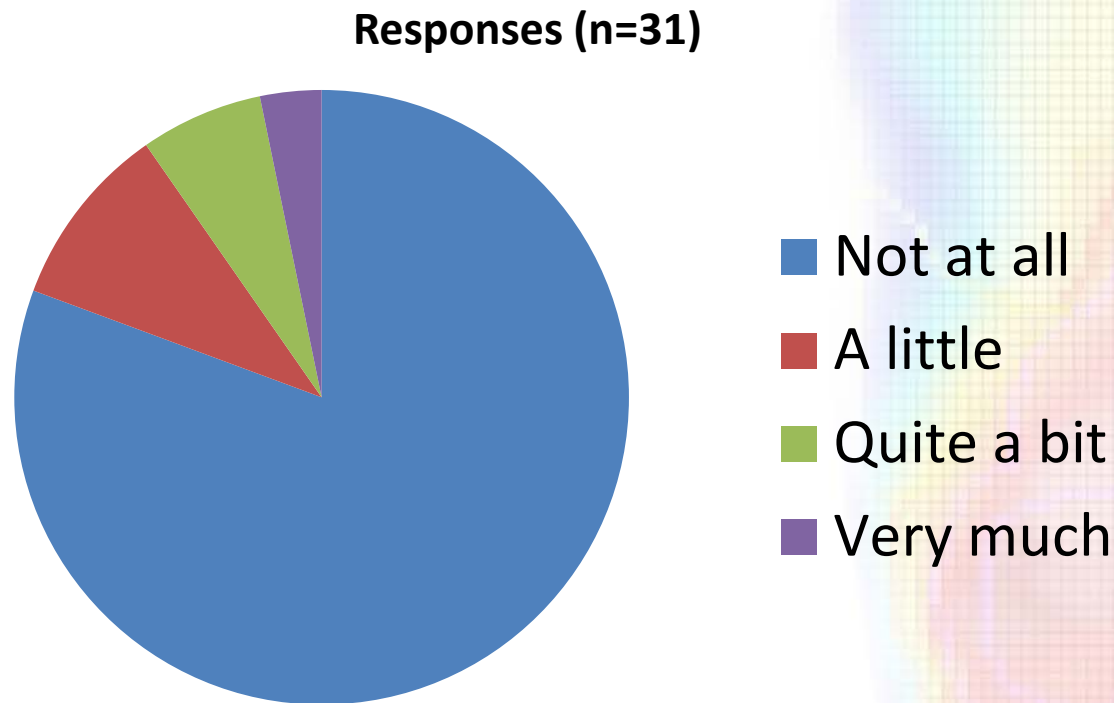
- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

14. Has your vagina felt dry during sexual activity or dilator use?



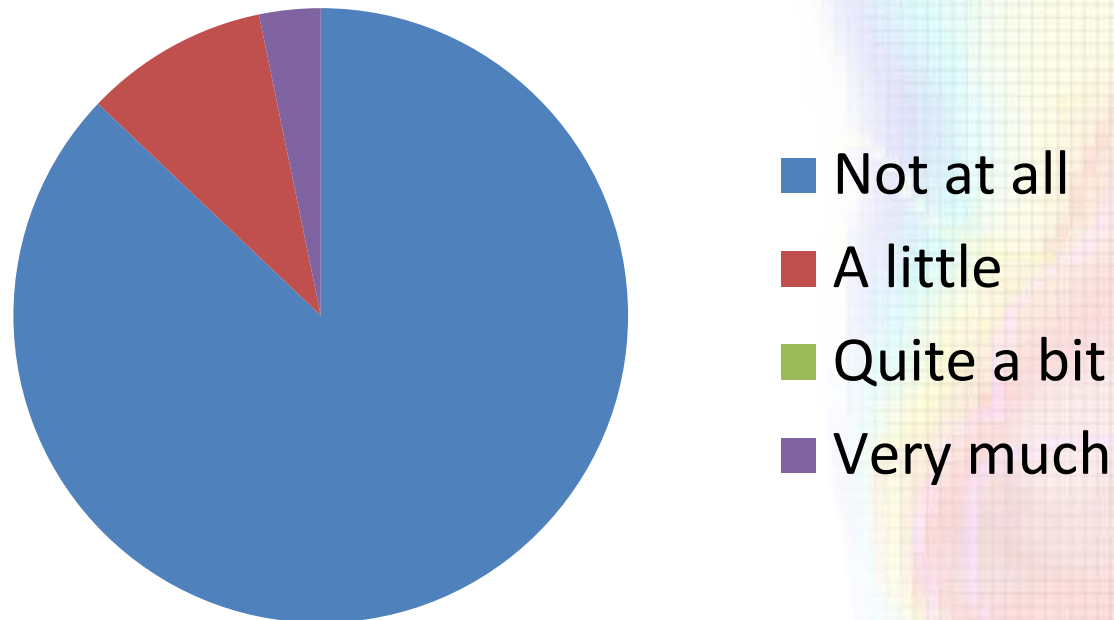
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

15. Have you had pain during sex or any other sexual activity?

Responses (n=31)



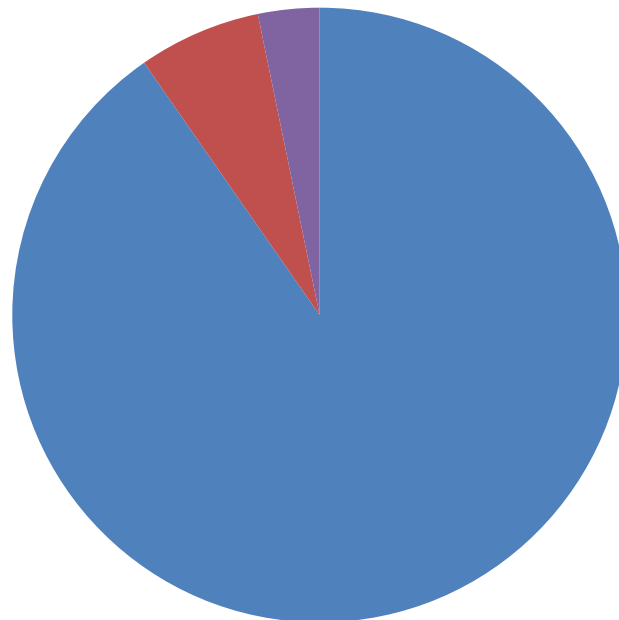
Results:

Toxicity Questionnaire at 6 months

In the last 4 weeks:

16. Has your vagina felt tight?

Responses (n=31)



- Not at all
- A little
- Quite a bit
- Very much

Discussion

At the 6-month time point, patients reported few toxicities; these included:

- Minor bladder symptoms:
 - Frequency (22.6%)
 - Leakage (35.5%)
 - Dysuria (9.7%)
- Vaginal complaints:
 - Minor discharge (16.1%)
 - Minor bleeding (6.5%)

Discussion

At the 6-month time point, patients reported few toxicities; these included:

- Gastrointestinal complaints:
 - Urgency (19.4%)
 - Diarrhoea (ranging from little, 22.6% to quite a bit, 3.2%)
- Dilator compliance was reasonable:
 - 48.4% used dilators 1 to 2 times per week
 - 6.2% used dilators > 2 times per week

Conclusion

- The telephone follow-up method has proven to be useful for patients who have received brachytherapy.
- It is an especially useful tool for follow up of patient's who live in regional areas.
- Phone follow-up is offered to all brachytherapy patients as a Standard of Care.
- Encouragingly, the participants have reported:
 - Minimal, if any, acute side effects
 - Majority are compliant in dilator usage



THANK YOU

