

Patterns of Care and Survival Outcomes for Soft Tissue Sarcomas at a Tertiary Cancer Centre in Sub- Saharan Africa: A Systematic Review of the Literature from 2003

M, p, h, o, M, o, l, a, p, o, ,, T, h, a, b, o, M, o, k, o, e, n, a, ,, M, a, m, e, l, l,
o, P, h, a, f, o, l, i, ,, T, e, b, o, h, o, L, e, t, s, i, e

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| Abstract

Soft tissue sarcomas represent a significant oncological challenge in sub-Saharan Africa, where late presentation and resource constraints are prevalent. The Ocean Road Cancer Institute in Dar es Salaam is a major referral centre for such cases. Understanding the patterns of care and survival outcomes in this setting is necessary to inform clinical practice and policy. This systematic review aimed to synthesise published evidence on the patterns of care and survival outcomes for patients with soft tissue sarcomas treated at the Ocean Road Cancer Institute. Its objectives were to identify common treatment modalities, barriers to optimal care, and reported survival rates. A systematic literature review was conducted following PRISMA guidelines. Multiple electronic databases were searched for relevant studies. Inclusion criteria required studies to report on patterns of care or survival outcomes for sarcoma patients at the institute. Data were extracted and synthesised narratively due to heterogeneity in study designs and reported outcomes. A limited number of studies met the inclusion criteria. The available evidence indicates a pattern of late-stage presentation, with most patients having locally advanced or metastatic disease. Treatment approaches were often non-standardised, with surgery as the primary modality. Access to radiotherapy and systemic therapies was inconsistent and limited. The evidence base for soft tissue sarcoma management at this tertiary centre is sparse. Synthesised data reveal

significant challenges, including advanced disease at presentation and variable treatment access, which likely contribute to poor survival outcomes. This underscores a critical gap in region-specific oncological research. There is a need for robust, prospective clinical studies to accurately document disease patterns, treatment protocols, and survival data. Investment in multidisciplinary care and the development of standardised treatment guidelines tailored to resource-limited settings are recommended. soft tissue sarcoma, patterns of care, survival outcomes, sub-Saharan Africa, systematic review, tertiary care centre. This review consolidates the existing, limited evidence on soft tissue sarcoma management at a major referral centre in sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting systemic challenges and the urgent need for enhanced research and standardised care pathways in the region.
