All paediatric oncology centres in the UK have joined the UK Paediatric Oncology Coronavirus Cancer Monitoring Project, registering cases of COVID-19 in children with cancer since the outbreak of the pandemic. This is a summary of the data on 18 May 2020.

46 of 1700 children tested positive for COVID-19 (3% of children with cancer tested positive)

6.5 years (average) of age

48% were 5 years of age or under

SYMPTOMS

7 (15%) tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms of COVID-19

34 (74%) had mild symptoms (like a mild cold, or just a temperature with nothing else) but did not need any additional treatment

2 (4%) had moderate symptoms (like a really bad cold, but often not enough to need to stay in hospital) but did not need any additional treatment

1 (2%) needed some additional treatment in hospital including oxygen but not intensive care

2 (4%) required additional treatment including intensive care with/without ventilation

OUTCOMES

Outcomes are currently known for 45 patients

82% of patients were discharged home

16% of patients remained in hospital, unrelated to COVID-19, e.g. for inpatient cancer treatment

2% (1 individual patient) sadly died as a result of their cancer, but this was unrelated to COVID-19.

CONCLUSIONS

• Our UK data currently suggest that children receiving cancer treatment are not at increased risk of developing symptoms from COVID-19 infection and do well even if on very rare occasions they develop the more serious symptoms associated with COVID-19 infection. This is in keeping with the data emerging from other countries.

• It is likely that a larger number of children with cancer have contracted COVID-19 and not shown symptoms and therefore have not been tested. This means it is probable that a larger group have contracted the virus and not been ill.

Figure of 1700 patients on treatment is extrapolated from English SACT data courtesy of Public Health England.

Anonymised patient data provided securely to the University of Birmingham for analysis.

Project steering group: https://ukcoronaviruscancermonitoring.com/paediatrics/project-management/

Where given percentages do not sum to 100% this is due to rounding.