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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

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***Title:**

A targeted biofeedback programme improves functional outcome following low anterior resection

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***Abstract (max. 350 words):**

Introduction: Anterior resection syndrome (ARS) impacts on the quality of life in up to 60% of patients who have had rectal cancer treatment. No standard treatment is currently available for ARS. This study evaluated the effectiveness of a targeted biofeedback programme on bowel function and quality of life in patients with ARS.

Methods: Prospective data was collected from 32 consecutive patients who underwent a 4-stage nurse specialist-led biofeedback programme. All patients had undergone a sphincter-preserving procedure with an ileostomy, which had subsequently been reversed. Bowel diaries, Wexner score, SF-36 and GIQoL were used to assess patient outcomes at each stage.

Results: Mean time from surgery to commencement of biofeedback was 50.25 weeks (Range: 8-240). 31 patients completed treatment with 94% satisfaction with the programme. Mean follow-up was 14.5 weeks (4-36). Significant improvements were observed in defecations/day [mean baseline: 7.2 (1-15) vs. post-biofeedback: 2.4 (1-4) P<0.001], leakages /day [mean baseline: 6.2 (1-14) vs. post-biofeedback: 0.1 (0-1) P<0.001], deferment time in minutes [mean baseline: 3.3 (0.5-15) vs. post-biofeedback: 11.1 (2-30) P<0.001] and incontinent episodes/week [mean baseline: 3.8 (0-28) vs. post-biofeedback: 0.1 (0-1) P<0.006]. Wexner scores improved in all 18 patients who completed the questionnaires [mean baseline: 7.7 vs. post-biofeedback: 3.5 P<0.005]. Significant improvements were seen in both quality of life questionnaire scores.

Conclusion: A targeted biofeedback programme is an effective method in the short-term management of ARS.