



Continuous Improvement in Care *cancer*

The Continuous Improvement in Care – Cancer Project (CIC Cancer Project)

Despite cancer incidence in Australia dropping over the last decade, the number of people living with cancer has more than doubled to over one million in the last two decades and this figure is forecast to double again by 2030. In part, this rise reflects better detection, cancer management strategies, including multi-disciplinary care that spans public and private service providers, and consequent improved survival. As encouraging as this is, further improvements in cancer care and patient outcomes will require better capture and use of a wide range of patient data collected during their cancer journey. The current siloed approach to data collection makes it difficult to gather and access patient data and effectively measure and report, benchmark, and promote treatments in an evidence-based manner. To enable health services to further improve outcomes, there is an urgent need for information that helps:

- reduce clinical variability;
- provide new insights about the cost benefits/effectiveness of new treatments;
- customise care to individual patients; and
- develop, test, and implement interventions that improve survival, functional recovery, and quality of life while minimising long-term side-effects of treatment and the disease.

The CIC Cancer Project is an innovative program of research that places cancer patients first and provides opportunities for patients and their carers to receive the care that they need at the time that they need it. This project will directly improve the lives of those diagnosed with cancer by bringing together consumers, clinicians, health services and researchers to:

- measure both clinical outcomes and outcomes important to patients through understanding patients' perception of their own health (patient-reported outcomes (PROs));
- identify gaps in their care; and
- trial new ways to improve treatment.

The project is implemented across five public and private hospital settings in Perth to measure value-based outcomes across five cancer types, using internationally established methods (International Consortium for Health Outcomes - ICHOM). Information that reflects the disease process, cost of care, and PROs is collected along the cancer care pathway (e.g. diagnosis, treatment, survivorship, and end of life). This is used to:

- feedback to individual services on the care they provide to allow assessment and improvements;
- work with health providers to identify variations in patient outcomes and improve appropriateness of treatment options;
- measure the cost of different pathways and compare this to outcomes achieved; and
- develop new research and development programs to address gaps and advance clinical practice.

We believe this is the first time that this strategy has been implemented simultaneously across hospitals in the public and private healthcare sectors. This will provide a unique understanding of the pathway that many people in Australia take during their cancer journey to deliver better experience and outcomes.

More information can be found on the CIC Cancer Project at <https://www.ciccancer.com>



This work was carried out with the support of the Grant provided by the Cancer Research Trust

This project was funded by the 'Western Australian Health Translation Network's Health Service Translational Research Project Grant' and 'the Australian



The project is developing an IT system to routinely collect clinical information from health service providers and integrate with PRO measures captured over time and embedded into clinical practice. Analysis, reporting, and use of real time dashboards will:

- identify patient concerns;
- assist with recognising patients with greatest needs and issues;
- develop evidence-based care pathways according to the relevant outcome scores; and
- allow for comparison of outcomes between different care pathways.

Combined outcomes data for different treatment pathways and options will provide patients with a better understanding of potential changes in their health over time and assist in more effective engagement in decisions regarding their care. Routine collection of PROs will also open conversations between patients and their clinicians regarding treatment options, evidence, benefits, and risks. This, combined with patients' preferences and goals, will lead to shared decision-making – patient involvement in decisions about the best options for their circumstances. It is hoped that the potential impact of transparent reporting of outcomes will influence both individual consumers' decisions and overall community health literacy.

Studies suggest that effective and sustainable introduction of PROs into routine clinical care can result in earlier interventions; potentially reducing costs associated with more advanced disease and improving survival for patients. Analysis of key drivers of patient outcomes over time is important so that certain categories of patients receiving particular interventions and who experience better or worse health (or increased costs) can be identified. This, in turn, will provide a benchmark for patient outcomes to which cancer treatments are compared against for effectiveness, cost-benefit, and value – leading to changes in practice and policy.

Comprehensive measurement of clinical, economic, and PROs data and embedding the process into routine clinical practice is vital if we are to improve the health of the community. Through the CIC Cancer project, it will also be possible to provide a template for improving the long-term monitoring and treatment of other chronic conditions – such as musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular disease, asthma, and diabetes – with translation to all Australian settings.

