

Optimal Cancer Care Pathways: Achievements and future directions

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Background

The Optimal Care Pathways (OCPs) (previously patient management frameworks) are intended to guide the delivery of consistent, safe, high-quality and evidence-based care for people with cancer.

Objectives

The OCPs describe the optimal care for common types of cancer and expand the scope to include emerging areas of practice such as optimal supportive care, optimal communication, and survivorship. The aim is to improve patient outcomes by reducing variation in care across the whole pathway.

The Cancer Council Victoria (CCV) has been appointed by the Victorian Department of Health to review the OCPs to:

- ensure OCPs reflect current best practice and continue to support the delivery of optimal care at critical points throughout the patient journey
- develop consumer friendly versions to assist patient and carers navigate the care pathway and quick reference guides designed for use by General Practitioners (GPs).

Method

Multidisciplinary expert working groups for each tumour stream meet to review and agree the content for each pathway. This is followed by waves of public consultation, key stakeholder review and consultation with relevant Colleges and peak organisations, before final publication.

The OCPs identify specific steps, or critical points along the care pathway from prevention and early detection through to managing recurrent disease and end of life care.

Results

15 OCPs with consumer versions, and quick reference guides for GPs is planned by project close (December 2015).

They are endorsed by Cancer Council Australia, Cancer Australia, and the AHMAC funded National Cancer Expert Reference Group. They published online alongside OCPs for 13 other tumour streams.

The new OCPs are intended to be adopted nationally.

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