

# What are the barriers to implementation of the physical activity guidelines in lung cancer? A qualitative study involving expert clinicians

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**Background:** There are strong well-established evidence-based guidelines regarding physical activity (PA) for people with cancer. Despite the guidelines and supportive evidence, the current models of care are deficient in that the majority of people with lung cancer do not meet the PA guidelines; and there are no formal procedures in place for clinicians to promote and utilize these guidelines. The aims of this study were to identify the barriers and enablers to implementation of the PA guidelines in lung cancer management from the perspective of treating clinicians. **Methods:** A Qualitative study was conducted with focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Seventeen clinicians from five hospitals in Melbourne (eight physiotherapists, three respiratory physicians, two thoracic surgeons, two oncologists, two nurses) participated in the study. Focus groups and interviews were conducted by independent moderators. Semi-structured questions were used to explore attitudes, beliefs and experiences. Thematic analysis was used to interpret data. **Results:** Barriers at a hospital system level included: lack of standardised protocols; lack of knowledge; limited staffing and resources; limited time and lower prioritisation compared to delivery of other medical information particularly at time of diagnosis. Barriers at a patient level included: low motivation / fear to exercise; lacking knowledge regarding benefits; and external barriers (environment, social support, symptoms). Perceived enablers to implementation of PA included: adoption of a standardised framework; allocation of funding and resources; and individualisation at a patient level to enable behavioural change to increase PA. **Discussion:** Key barriers to implementation of the PA guidelines in lung cancer exist at both a hospital and patient level. Research targeted at bridging this gap is required in attempt to improve outcomes in lung cancer. **Funding:** National Health and Medicine Research Council (Translating Research Into Practice Fellowship) and Cancer Australia.