

GP CANSHARE ENHANCING CANCER MANAGEMENT IN PRIMARY CARE

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BACKGROUND

In 2019 CESP HN reviewed the role of primary care providers in cancer management. The review found that delays in access to information and appropriate communication between GPs and hospitals, significantly impacted quality cancer care and contributed to poorer patient outcomes. In 2019, CESP HN received funding to deliver a new cancer service in the region.

Shared cancer care can enhance system integration and service navigation for General Practice to better support patients' needs, with timely access to specialist cancer expertise.¹ Joint team-based planning is critical to improving cancer outcomes and the quality of life for people with cancer.

AIMS

The GP CanShare program aims to:

- Strengthen integration between cancer and palliative care specialists, community services and general practices.
- Enhance capability of general practice to effectively manage and care for their cancer patients.

RESULTS

This service has achieved enhanced system integration across six major Sydney Cancer treatment sites (see Diagram 1). The data indicates GP CanShare is currently achieving program goals with:

- Over 2000 patients enrolled in GP CanShare, with greater access to services based on their specific healthcare needs during cancer treatment, survivorship and palliative care.
- Over 800 GPs involved in GP CanShare, providing GPs a direct link to the patient's acute treatment team.

THE FUTURE OF GP CANSHARE AND SHARED CANCER CARE IN AUSTRALIA

- CESP HN will continue to work with local partners to ensure patients continue to benefit from integrated care with GP links to dedicated, specialist staff for information about their cancer treatment, survivorship and palliative care.
- CESP HN will advocate for ongoing funding for primary care to play an enhanced role in cancer management to embed integrated, patient-centered care across the primary, community and acute settings more broadly.
- A cost benefit analysis of the program and further program enhancements will be implemented to enable GP CanShare to be utilised in cancer services throughout Australia.

References.

1. Cancer Australia. (2013). Principles of shared care. Retrieved from <https://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/publications-and-resources/cancer-australia-publications/shared-care-principles-shared-care>

Acronyms.

CESP HN - Central & Eastern Sydney PHN GP - General Practitioner
PHN - Primary Health Network CNC - Clinical Nurse Consultant

METHOD

- CESP HN commissioned three providers to deliver a co-designed service, GP CanShare. The service is a patient-centered, shared care model embedded in 6 major treatment centres across Sydney. See Diagram 1.
- Specialised 'GP CanShare' Nurse Coordinators and a Palliative Care Social Worker provide general practice with regular patient updates and facilitate greater opportunities for patients to see their GP regarding problems that can be managed in the primary care setting. See Figure 1.
- This program evaluation is occurring in real time alongside service implementation, with ongoing consultation and input from the cancer services' providers, the program advisory committee, GPs, patients and their families.



Hospital Sites.

1. Concord Repatriation General Hospital
2. Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
3. Prince of Wales Hospital
4. St Vincent's Hospital Kinghorn Cancer Centre
5. St George Hospital
6. Sutherland Hospital



Diagram 1. GP CanShare Cancer Services sites across Central and Eastern Sydney

GPCANSHARE IMPROVING CANCER CARE FOR ALL



Figure 1. GP CanShare program support for GPs, Practice Nurses and Allied Health professionals.

Support and advice for GPs, PNs and Allied Health is available 8 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday.

- SERVICE NAVIGATION
- INFORMATION AND SUPPORT
- PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE
- SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT
- REFERRAL PATHWAYS
- SHARED CARE PLANS
- TREATMENTS
- SURVIVORSHIP CARE

THE IMPACT

Provider reports and initial GP and patient feedback indicates better quality, patient-centered care with:

- Building of positive relationships with GPs enabling service navigation and supporting coordination and continuity of care.
- Enhanced service navigation for General Practice to better support patients' needs, with timely access to specialist cancer expertise and patient care updates.
- Health equity and access: demonstrated advocacy roles of GP CanShare CNCs for Priority Populations.

As a result of GPCanShare, patients are experiencing improved access to cancer services, highlighting the value of a novel integrated care approach that brings together clinicians in primary care and cancer services.

It's great to have a person who works in the middle of all this to tell me what I need to do or what is going on.
St George Hospital patient.

The GP CanShare Social Worker supported me to access a GP that could see me regularly. It was such a relief, I was no longer worrying about being able to make it into the hospital.
Concord Hospital patient.

For more information, visit the CESP HN Cancer Management website



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