

EXEMPLAR OF EVIDENCE-BASED CARE IN PRACTICE

Development of a business case to establish a nutrition service for chemotherapy outpatients

WHAT did the initiative involve?

Key components of business case included:

- **Gap in service** – overview of current Alfred Health outpatient oncology service with analysis of attendance and growth rates; completion of benchmarking with other health services; data on rates of malnutrition using results from malnutrition point prevalence study.
- **Evidence base** – outline of current evidence-based guidelines highlighting the importance of nutrition intervention throughout the whole trajectory of a patient's cancer journey (including pre/during/post treatment). This included: Optimal cancer care pathways (OCPs), ESPEN guideline on nutrition in cancer patients, and The National Institute of Clinical Excellence guidelines for haematological cancers.
- **Consequences and risk involved if no change is made** - increased mortality/infections/serious complications, reduced muscle mass and poor physical function, increased length of hospital stay and admissions, increased healthcare costs, increased treatment-related toxicity, reduced response to treatment and increased relapse rates.
- **Predicted benefits of new service** - reduced incidence of malnutrition/sarcopenia/cancer cachexia; improved recovery from the side-effects of chemotherapy; enhanced recovery post cancer surgery; reduced length of stay and prevention of readmissions due to nutrition failure; improved clinical outcomes, mortality and morbidity; improved patient satisfaction and quality of life.
- **Proposal** – outline of proposed changes including what the new allocated nutrition service would include, expected outcomes and recommended actions.
- **Financials** – breakdown of staffing full-time equivalent (FTE) and other financial requirements.

WHO was involved in the initiative?

Dietitian led initiative.

WHERE did the initiative occur?

Outpatient Haematology and Oncology Centre, Alfred Health, Melbourne.

WHO was the target of the initiative?

Adult patients (≥ 18 years) with cancer attending the haematology and oncology outpatient centre.

WHEN was the initiative undertaken?

April 2019

HOW was the initiative undertaken?	Business case presented to Alfred Cancer executives to advocate and request future funding to establish a new clinical service.
OUTCOMES	0.6FTE (Grade 3) requested, 0.3FTE (Grade 3) received. <u>Next steps:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design and implement a model of care based on international best practice guidelines and optimal care pathways to provide a collaborative and effective nutrition service for oncology outpatients.• Collect ongoing data to advocate for additional FTE.