A 7 week outpatient rehabilitation program improves physical function and quality of life in cancer patients

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Why Cancer Rehabilitation?

• With improvements in cancer detection, diagnosis and treatment; people with cancer are now living longer

• Cancer is now seen as a chronic illness, with rehabilitation an essential step of the cancer care journey

• Stable rise in the incidence of cancer, as well as a rise in the number of survivors
Why Cancer Rehabilitation?

• At a State Government level, the Victoria Cancer Action Plan (VCAP) predicts the number of new cancer diagnoses will increase by up to 40% in the next 10 years
• In addition, people with cancer are living longer
• The five year survival rate from cancer in Victoria has increased from 48% in 1990 to 61% in 2004
• It is anticipated that by 2015 the five year survival rate will be 67%
What is Cancer Rehabilitation?

• Cancer rehabilitation is a concept that is defined by the patient and involves helping a person with cancer to obtain maximum physical, social, psycho-logic, and vocational functioning within the limits imposed by the disease and its treatment (De Lisa, 2001)

• Aim of clinicians is to restore patient’s sense that they are gaining some control of their lives.
Benefits of cancer rehabilitation

- Range of Motion
- Muscle strength
- Balance
- Treatment related side effects
- Aerobic capacity
- Body image
- Sense of control
- Depression and mood
- Quality of life
Why Oncology Rehabilitation

• Increasing need
• To enhance physical and psychosocial recovery
• Assist with achievement of goals
• Provide strategies to enhance self managed health care
Program Outline

- 7 week period program
- Two components: exercise and education
- 2 hour sessions, twice a week
- Pre and post assessments
Information sessions

• Exercise
• Getting back to what I used to do
• Managing the common side effects
• Caring for family, friends and other support people
• Fatigue
• Relaxation
Information sessions

• Complementary therapies
• Advance care planning
• Nutrition
• Sleep hygiene
• Planning a holiday
• Self - esteem, relationships and intimacy
Exercise Component

• Warm Up
• Aerobic exercises
• Resistance exercises
• Balance exercises
• Cool Down
Outcome Measures

• Endurance – 6 minute walk test
• Walking speed – 6 meter walk
• Upper Limb Strength – Biceps Curl
• Lower Limb Strength – Sit to Stand x5
• Balance – Step test
• Quality of Life – SF36
Initial Assessment

The Distress Thermometer

First please circle the number (0-10) that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week including today. Second, please indicate if any of the following has been a problem for you in the past week including today. Be sure to check YES or NO for each.

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**Practical Problems**
- Child Care
- Housing
- Insurance/financial
- Transportation
- Work/school

**Family Problems**
- Dealing with children
- Dealing with partner
- Dealing with close
- Friend/relative

**Emotional Problems**
- Depression
- Fears
- Nervousness
- Sadness
- Worry
- Loss of interest in usual activities

**Physical Problems**
- Appearance
- Bathing/dressing
- Breathing
- Changes in urination
- Constipation
- Diarrhoea
- Eating
- Fatigue
- Feeling Swollen
- Fevers
- Getting around
- Indigestion
- Memory/concentration
- Mouth sores
- Nausea
- Nose dry/congested
- Pain
- Sexual
- Skin dry itchy
- Sleep
- Tingling in hands/feet

**Spiritual/religious concerns**

"Other problems"

[Image: Eastern Health logo]
6 minute walk*

* p=0.00, n=45
6 Metre Walk*

* $p=0.00$, $n=45$
Step Test

* \( p=0.00, n=45 \)
Sit to Stand x5 reps*

* p=0.00, n=45
Biceps Curl (reps/30 s)*

* $p < 0.01$, $n=14$
SF36 Outcomes

* p<0.01, n=28
Emotional Well-Being*
Energy / Fatigue*
Role Limitation-Emotional
Social Functioning*

* p<0.05, n=28
* $p \leq 0.01$, $n=28$
Summary

- Participants walked faster
- Participants improved their balance in standing and walking
- Most participants achieved their goals. Some exceeded their goals.
- Fatigue improved
- There was improvement in patients quality of life
Conclusion

- Physical function and quality of life has improved
- With an increase in the number of cancer diagnoses, and a greater life expectancy, the burden of illness and the associated costs will increase. It is anticipated that programs with a self management focus, such as the EHAORP will reduce pressure on the health care systems resources and capacities.
Referral Criteria

- A primary diagnosis of cancer
- Those who struggle with deconditioning and fatigue
- Cognitive and physical status allowing participation
- Reside in Eastern Health catchment
- Karnofsky score of 60 or above (able to carry out most needs with occasional assistance)
- Delwyn Morgan – 0457 563 174
Questions ???