

# 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 ( $\geq 18$  years) with cancer attending the haematology and oncology outpatient centre.

**WHEN** was the initiative undertaken?

April 2019

<b>HOW</b> was the initiative undertaken?	Business case presented to Alfred Cancer executives to advocate and request future funding to establish a new clinical service.
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<p>0.6FTE (Grade 3) requested, 0.3FTE (Grade 3) received.</p> <p><u>Next steps:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li><li>• Collect ongoing data to advocate for additional FTE.</li></ul>