



MEDIA RELEASE

Parties urged to back broad cancer care navigation pilot in Tasmania

- ***Advocacy group All.Can Australia is calling on both sides of federal politics to commit to funding the first pilot site for a national approach to cancer care navigation in Tasmania.***
- ***A broader approach to cancer care navigation will ensure more Australians receive support following a diagnosis – regardless of cancer type, demographic or location.***
- ***New research shows there may be up to \$46 million in savings to the health system per year by implementing a new model.¹***

May 2022: Tasmanian oncologists are joining advocacy group All.Can Australia's efforts to ensure more Tasmanians receive support as they navigate a complex health system following a diagnosis of cancer. [All.Can Australia](#) is encouraging both sides of politics to support the piloting of Australia's first national broad cancer care navigation model, with Tasmania being proposed as the first site.

According to All.Can Australia, Tasmania represents a viable option for the pilot of the proposed cancer care navigation model due to its regional and rural status, the need to reduce existing gaps in cancer care and provide equal support across the state.

Once the cancer care navigation model is rolled out nationally, it has the potential to deliver incalculable benefits to over 150,000 Australians living with cancer.²

In partnership with Cancer Council Australia, All.Can Australia continues to have discussions with government about piloting a non-cancer specific care navigation model that is designed to provide guidance to all cancer patients - regardless of cancer type, patient demographic or location – as they go through the health system.

[New research](#) commissioned by All.Can Australia shows that the adoption of this new model, which is a hybrid system that uses technology and experienced navigators (both allied and healthcare professional), may be able to deliver multiple patient, health system and economic benefits.¹

According to Associate Professor Louise Nott, Medical Oncologist at Icon Cancer Centre Hobart, an integrated approach to cancer care navigation would close the gap in care access.

"We know that many patients continue to experience distress and confusion navigating our fragmented health system once they receive their diagnosis - regardless of being in the private or public hospital system. There are patients who need to travel to various locations and clinics, which can be difficult without tailored support. We know the invaluable support cancer care nurses provide to patients with specific types of cancers, so now we need to break down that barrier to ensure every other patient can access the same support," said A/Professor Nott.

"It is important to explore the opportunity for Tasmania to pilot a new model of cancer care navigation. I'm certain that even in its early stages, a more cohesive approach to navigation will alleviate a lot of the stress I now see in patients. Many organisations and healthcare professionals agree that navigation needs to be prioritised so we are improving the way we support patients."



Cancer Care Navigation Pilot: Key offerings and opportunities³

- **Referral to service from existing services:** Encourages connection with the patient's existing treatment team to avoid a 'siloed' approach to support and information sharing.
- **Easy-to-access support via a secure, user-friendly app:** Patients will be able to download an app to set up a profile that will capture their clinical information to guide how they receive support and the type of information that is shared with them.
- **Merging technology and human interactions:** Rather than relying on one delivery method, the program uses the app to verify the patient's needs, aggregate information from existing resources, and encourages face-to-face or telehealth interaction with navigators only where needed. Patients with low needs will benefit from the program's ability to curate key information to guide their cancer journey. For higher needs patients, experienced navigators (allied or healthcare professionals) can step in to provide another layer of support to address more complex issues.
- **Connection with existing support services:** If patients are suitable for existing support services, the program will present options and guide application processes. This includes information on available treatment opportunities, support programs, educational resources, etc. Patients have control to opt into these recommended services.
- **Reminders sent to check on patients:** Push notifications via the app help to remind patients of information that is recommended to them. It also provides another opportunity to connect with a cancer care navigator.

Professor John Zalcborg – Co-Chair of the All.Can Australia Steering Committee and Head of the Cancer Research Program, Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine School of Public Health at Monash University – said committing to a pilot in Tasmania has the potential to transform cancer care delivery across the country.

"We have had ongoing discussions with the Federal Health Minister's office and the Prime Minister's office about piloting opportunities, with the hope that funding would have been delivered in the budget. Now we are urging both parties to consider this as a viable option in future," said Professor Zalcborg.

"Our conversations with Cancer Council Australia, McGrath Foundation and other healthcare professionals across Australia tells us that we all want the same thing – to ensure equitable access to support services for all cancer patients. We urge Liberal and Labor to recognise this need and help us deliver a solution."

Bill Petch –Co-Chair of the All.Can Australia Steering Committee– supports the move to prioritise a pilot of the proposed model in Tasmania.

"This pilot is our opportunity to scale the model and get it ready for the real world. It is our chance to gather important insights from patients, clinicians and other healthcare workers, plus trial emerging technology that will drive greater connectivity and greater access in the cancer space," said Mr Petch.

"Patients have long shared their feelings of disempowerment within our current health system. The adoption of a patient-centric and technology-driven navigation model could help address the multitude of unmet needs."

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Issued by Palin Communications on behalf of All.Can Australia. Palin Communications is the secretariat for the Australian All.Can initiative and provides administrative support to the Steering Committee.



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About All.Can

All.Can is an international, multi-stakeholder initiative involving patients, clinical, academic and industry experts, as well as policymakers. All.Can aims to help define better solutions for sustainable cancer care and improve patient outcomes in the future. All.Can is made possible with financial support from Bristol-Myers Squibb (main sponsor), Amgen, MSD and Johnson & Johnson (sponsors) and Varian (contributor), with additional non-financial (in kind) support from Intacare and Goings-On.

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None of the content of All.Can discussions or activities is specific or biased to any specific treatment or therapy.

References

1. All.Can Australia. Patient insights on cancer care: Opportunities for improving efficiency. Findings from the international All.Can patient survey. Access via <https://www.all-can.org/national-initiatives/australia/#panel-pub-res>
2. Cancer Australia. All cancers in Australia. Available at <https://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/impacted-cancer/what-cancer/cancer-australia-statistics> (accessed January 2021).
3. All.Can Australia in association with HMA. Australian Government Department of Health, Innovation Cancer Care Navigation Service Draft for Proposal for Pilot Funding. September 2020.