



Background

Clinicians are important conduits that connect systems challenges in the delivery of best-practice treatment that are reflected at the individual patient level. Recognising the role of clinicians as advocates, over the past few years, the Clinical Network has undertaken considered approaches to building the capacity of clinicians as advocates and to ensuring the clinician voice informs policy and advocacy for improved cancer care.

Policy and advocacy projects are now a key mechanism for members to interact with the Clinical Network membership.

The Policy and Advocacy Program aims to bring together the Clinical Network advocacy projects under a structure that supports the development, implementation and evaluation of projects.

Purpose

To advocate for improvements in treatment and support by developing a shared advocacy agenda between cancer clinicians and Cancer Council Victoria.

Objectives	Strategies
1. To enable clinicians to inform and lead improvements in Victorian cancer care over the next four years.	Facilitate Cancer Council Victoria’s and Victorian clinician’s involvement in the development and implementation of the Victorian Government Cancer Plan.
2. To advocate for system improvements relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More equitable access to cancer treatment for regional and rural Victorians. • Timely access to colonoscopy services for Victorians to support early detection of bowel cancer. • Increased patient access to cancer care coordinators across Victoria. 	<p>Advocate for improvements to the Victorian Patient and Transport Assistance Scheme (VPTAS) and influencing the 2016 VPTAS review.</p> <p>Advocate for and support system improvements to allow for timely access to colonoscopy services for patients across Victoria.</p> <p>Undertake the Cancer Care Coordinators Mapping Project to identify existing care coordinator models and programs in Victoria.</p>
3. To highlight the growing impact of obesity and cancer care including practice implications.	Develop and provide recommendations to Government highlighting the impact of obesity on cancer care including the role of clinicians.

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To advocate for improvements in treatment and support by developing a shared advocacy agenda between cancer clinicians and Cancer Council Victoria.

Objectives	Strategies
4. To support clinician input into informing changes to the legal frameworks and policies that impact on cancer care.	Facilitate clinician input into other Cancer Council program advocacy work affecting clinicians i.e. the car parking project. Implementation/dissemination of findings of the Making the law work better for people affected by cancer report and further development of issues including access to insurance, employment issues and end of life decision making.
5. Achieve progress in the priorities areas for cancer care identified in the Agenda for Cancer Control.	Maintain close watching brief on other Agenda for Cancer Control topics: improving access to radiotherapy, integration of IT and data to support improved cancer care. Communicate progress in these areas.
6. Respond to topical cancer care issues in Victoria that affect clinicians as opportunities arise.	Ensuring capacity in the Clinical Network to respond to timely and relevant issues that also align with our strategic goals, such as responding to calls for submissions and positions statements on tumour stream or specialty areas.

Outcomes

1. A body of work that has influenced policies that contribute to improvements in cancer care in Victoria.
2. A clear reputation as a significant voice in advocating for cancer care matters in Victoria.
3. Initiation and completion of projects that directly affect the practice of cancer clinicians.
4. Dissemination of developed resources and project achievements to clinicians.
5. Initiation and completion of projects that are non-partisan and representative of the views of multi-specialty disciplines.
6. Increased capacity of clinicians as advocates and the use of clinical specialist expertise in policy and advocacy projects.
7. Engagement of key specialist clinicians to respond to government inquiries, industry changes and advocate for improved patient care.