

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Cancer Information and Support Services

Cancer Council Helpline

Cancer Council Helpline is staffed by trained Cancer Nurses who have all completed cultural safety training. This free service is available Monday to Friday, 9 am – 5 pm to:

- help you make choices about your cancer treatment,
- link you to free support services and
- to provide you with any information you may need.

Simply call 13 11 20 to find out more.

Cancer Support Groups

Cancer Support Groups are a great place to yarn with others about their cancer and find out where you can get help. There are currently two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Support Groups available in Melbourne and Wodonga. Call the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 for more information.

Financial Planning and Assistance

This free service provides help with financial planning and/or work-related issues in cases of financial hardship.

If you or your family are experiencing financial or workplace difficulties following a diagnosis with cancer, we can help by providing free advice, support and assistance to help you out.

Services include:

- Financial Planning Service – professional help that can assist with superannuation, budgeting, insurance, Centrelink payments, debt management and more
- Workplace Advice Service – advice from professionals to help with a range of work related issues – from how and when to tell your employer about your diagnosis to tips for getting back into the workforce after sick leave
- Financial Assistance Program – help when you are experiencing financial hardship following a cancer diagnosis.

Holiday Break Program – Take a break away when it's needed most

It can be difficult to afford a holiday after a cancer diagnosis. We can help by offering a free short break for you and your family at a difficult time.

The break can provide:

- Quality time with loved ones, away from hospitals and treatment
- Time for rest and relaxation when its needed most.

Holidays are within Victoria and can usually be offered reasonably close to home to minimise travel.

Wig Service

This free service is for people affected by hair loss due to cancer treatment. It is available for people with cancer and cancer survivors including children.

The Wig Service can offer:

- The chance to select and be fitted with a wig of your choice
- A private chat with a cancer nurse about any cancer related issues.
- A chance to gain practical tips for looking after yourself
- Links to other services that may assist you and your family.

Advance Care Planning

This free service for cancer patients helps your family and medical team understand your health care wishes if you become too unwell to communicate your preferences in the future.

Clearly outlining your wishes for future medical care will take the confusion or potential conflict out of families guessing what is right for you.

Why should I have an Advance Care Plan?

- If you become so crook you cannot talk to your family or doctor about what you want and your treatment, who would make these decisions for you? And how would they know what you want?
- This can be a difficult topic to raise with your family and those close to you. But, information in your advance care plan will guide your family and health care team when making medical treatment decisions on your behalf.
- Your Advance Care Plan only comes into effect if you become so unwell you are unable to make, or communicate, those wishes for yourself.

Living with Cancer Education Program

This free education and support program for people living with cancer, their families and friends provides information about how to deal with the day to day challenges of a diagnosis and teaches skills that can enhance the quality of life.

It offers an opportunity to interact and share with others in a similar situation and:

- Is suitable for men and women with all types of cancer, and their family and friends
- Supports everyone from newly diagnosed to those with recurrent cancer
- Is led by health professionals in a small group, for two hours a week over four weeks or over one full day.

The program can help you to:

- Get the most out of your healthcare team
- Cope better with treatments and side effects
- Learn how to relax and manage stress
- Communicate with children, family, friends and colleagues
- Share with others going through a similar experience
- Gain information and support for family members and friends.

Topics covered in the program include:

- What is cancer?
- Cancer treatments and myths
- Proven and unproven treatments
- Communicating with the healthcare team
- Communicating with family and others
- Personal experiences and emotions
- Relationships and self esteem
- Healthy eating
- Relaxation
- Tips for improving self-care
- Accessing community services.

Artwork by Andrew Bamblett.

*Please call 13 11 20
for more information
about our cancer
information and support
services from an experienced
cancer nurse or visit
cancervic.org.au*