

Ministerial Taskforce for Cancer

Tumour streams

Frequently asked questions

What are tumour streams?

Tumour streams are described in *A Cancer Services Framework for Victoria*. The concept of tumour streams includes: development of local collaborating tumour groups based on the ten tumour streams; statewide mechanisms to support tumour stream development; standards of care and facility standards; clinical and performance indicators; and classification of cancer services based on the range of services they can provide.

What are the categories of tumour streams?

Ten types of tumours account for more than 90 per cent of the total incidence of cancer in Victoria. *A Cancer Services Framework for Victoria* recommended that organ or system specific tumour streams be adopted to reduce variation in care. The recommended tumour streams are:

1. Genito-urinary cancers, including cancers of the prostate, bladder, kidney, and testis
2. Colorectal cancer
3. Breast cancer
4. Lung cancer
5. Skin cancers, notably melanoma
6. Haematological malignancies, encompassing lymphomas, leukaemia, and myeloma
7. Gynaecological cancers
8. Head and neck cancers
9. Upper gastro-intestinal cancers, encompassing cancers of the oesophagus, stomach, pancreas, and hepato-biliary system
10. Central nervous system cancers

How will tumour streams be developed?

Tumour streams will take a number of years to develop. Clinicians have a strong leadership role in establishing and implementing the tumour streams and are encouraged to determine the most effective way to develop local collaborating tumour groups in their respective Integrated Cancer Service (ICS).

The Ministerial Taskforce for Cancer identified that the first stage in the development of tumour streams will be a clear description of the care pathway for cancer patients, identifying critical points along the pathway and the optimal care required. This concept will outline a Patient Management Framework for each of the tumour streams.

What is the purpose of the Patient Management Frameworks?

The purpose of the Patient Management Frameworks is to provide a consistent statewide approach to care across each of the tumour streams. The PMFs will be used by the Integrated Cancer Services and local tumour groups to identify gaps in care and improve services. The PMFs will also support the identification of clear referral pathways for each tumour stream across the Integrated Cancer Service network.

The Patient Management Frameworks will include:

- identification of the critical points across the continuum of care, from diagnosis to palliative care, to enable optimal patient management. A critical point is defined as an instance in the care pathway where decisions and care provided will impact significantly on the outcome for the patient;
- a brief description of current best practice, including where appropriate clinical guidelines, consensus statements, standards and research exist to support optimal care;
- consideration of the requirements at each critical point in the care pathway to enable optimal care such as clinical expertise, skill mix, resourcing and equipment; and
- description of the investigations, therapies, clinical expertise, facilities and supports that need to be available at each critical point.