

# Victorian Cancer Survivorship Program Phase II Grants Scheme

## Funded Projects

### Grants Scheme Overview

The Victorian Cancer Survivorship Program (VCSP) aims to facilitate the health sector's ability to achieve a person-centred, flexible and coordinated approach to care for people who have completed treatment for cancer. The VCSP Phase II Grants Scheme will assist the sector to develop, implement, evaluate and embed the models of survivorship care over the next three years (2016-2019).

The VCSP Phase II Grants Scheme objectives are to:

- Implement models for post-treatment care shared across acute and primary care, encouraging the use and reprioritisation of existing services and funding streams, and with a focus on sustainability – both within the service implementing the project and the health system more generally.
- Create effective partnerships to implement innovative post-treatment models of care to aid recovery, particularly focusing on building the capacity of primary and community care to support cancer survivors.
- Better support people who have been affected by cancer in the post-treatment phase, including facilitating and building capacity for survivor self-management.
- Develop resources and the evidence-base for survivorship care in Victoria, building on the evidence and resources already developed by the projects in Phase I and by the Australian Cancer Survivorship Centre.
- Improve understanding of the specific needs of specific patient groups, differentiated by age, gender, tumour type, nationality or cultural background.
- Evaluate all funded models and interventions for acceptability, effectiveness, sustainability and transferability, with reference to the Phase II evaluation and outcomes framework.

Three types of grant funding were offered as described in the following table:

Grant type	Purpose	Funding per project	Funding timeframe per grant	Number of applications received	Number of projects funded
<b>1: Capacity building</b>	To support services that wish to leverage on existing funding/ initiatives to build survivorship capacity, service redesign, resource development or to address a specific need e.g. workforce training	≤ \$100K	≤ 1 year	16	4
<b>2: General Cancer Survivorship</b>	To support innovative approaches to survivorship care	≤ \$300K	≤ 3 years	9	2
<b>3: Primary and Community</b>	To support greater collaboration in the development of shared-care	≤ \$300K	≤ 3 years	14	7

Grant type	Purpose	Funding per project	Funding timeframe per grant	Number of applications received	Number of projects funded
Health	models between the acute and primary/ community care sectors and build capacity in the primary/ community sector.				

The 13 funded projects are listed below.

## Grant Type 1

- **Project Title: Disability awareness and inclusion resource pack for professionals and organisations providing support to breast cancer survivors**

**Lead Applicant:** Ms Amy Gough

**Organisation:** Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) in collaboration with Scope Australia:

**Duration:** 12 months

**Description:** This project aims to increase the capacity of organisations and professionals to provide survivorship information and support to people with disabilities diagnosed with breast cancer. Building on findings from previous consultations with people with disabilities, carers and health professionals, Breast Cancer Network Australia and Scope Australia will develop a disability awareness and inclusion resource pack that captures the experiences of people with disabilities. The pack will be piloted, and a disability inclusion network established to support address disability inclusion and increase collaboration between cancer organisations.

- **Project Title: Making it work: Development of a resource to help adolescents and young adult survivors with cancer re-engage in education and employment**

**Lead Applicant:** Prof Susan Sawyer

**Organisation:** Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI)

**Duration:** 12 months

**Description:** We have shown that AYA survivors of cancer face particular challenges around education and employment due to their health, treatment and emotional wellbeing. We aim to develop a resource for AYAs and their families to empower, inform and navigate their return to school and work. It will normalize the challenges and context of re-engaging with school or returning to work, describe education and employment options and forms of financial assistance, and promote gradual re-entry if required. The goal is to help AYAs appreciate how pathways and supports apply to them in their circumstances.

- **Project Title: Capacity building for the development of an oncology rehabilitation model of care for cancer survivors within a subacute ambulatory care service (SACS)**

**Lead Applicant:** Ms Kathryn Bailey

**Organisation:** St Vincent's Hospital

**Duration:** 12 months

**Description:** Cancer survivors after primary treatment often require ongoing support to enable them to return to independence. This project aims to address the needs of cancer survivors by implementing a goal-directed 8 week group exercise and education program to address physical, psychosocial and carer needs. Twice weekly, one hour exercise sessions, and one hour education sessions conducted by allied health professionals will address physical and psychosocial issues. A carer support program will also be offered. The model encourages the development of self-management strategies in cancer survivors.

- **Project Title: Implementation and evaluation of an internet-based brain training program to reduce the chemotherapy-associated cognitive impairment of cancer survivors who have had bone marrow transplantation**

**Lead Applicant:** Dr Matthew Ku

**Organisation:** Austin Health

**Duration:** 12 months

**Description:** Chemotherapy-related cognitive impairment is a well-recognised side effect of many cancer survivors. Emerging data indicates a high frequency of this problem, which impacts the survivors' physical and psychosocial wellbeing. However, no definitive treatment options exist for their optimal care. This project aims to assess the extent of this problem in survivors who have had chemotherapy for blood cancers, and are about to have bone marrow transplantation. An internet-based brain training program will then be implemented in these patients to improve their cognitive capacity. The effectiveness of the program will be assessed over six months.

## Grant Type 2

- **Project Title: Online self-management of cancer-related fatigue: a multimodal approach**

**Lead Applicant:** Dr Sharon Avery

**Organisation:** Alfred Health

**Duration:** 36 months

**Description:** Fatigue is a common and distressing long-term effect of cancer treatment and significantly affects quality of life. It is a complex problem and medications are largely ineffective. The management of cancer-related fatigue, therefore, represents a critical, yet unmet need for cancer survivors. Our project aims to reduce the burden of fatigue in cancer survivors by developing and evaluating an interactive online self-management program. Through this interface, cancer survivors will be able to access comprehensive information and a range of strategies to improve cancer-related fatigue based on best evidence and established guidelines.

- **Project Title: Telehealth for supportive survivorship care: Increasing access to a survivorship education, exercise and wellness program in rural and regional Victoria using telehealth**

**Lead Applicant:** Ms Megan Chiswell

**Organisation:** Cancer Council Victoria

**Duration:** 24 months

**Description:** This project will provide access to a comprehensive survivorship assessment, education, exercise and wellness program for rural and regional cancer survivors and carers. We will utilise synchronous (real time) Telehealth video conferencing to enable the participants to remain as close to home as practicable while accessing the program. The project will partner Cancer Council Victoria (CCV) with acute and primary health services in the Grampians and Hume Integrated Cancer Service regions. The project will innovate the CCV 'Wellness and Life After Cancer' delivery to include practical exercise and wellness sessions for survivors and carers.

## Grant Type 3

- **Project Title: Ex-Med Cancer: a community based exercise medicine program for cancer survivors**  
**Lead Applicant:** A/Prof Prue Cormie  
**Organisation:** Australian Catholic University  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** Many cancer survivors suffer serious long-term health problems. Research has established appropriate exercise as a safe and effective intervention for cancer survivors that leads to improved wellbeing. This evidence has led major organisations worldwide to recommend exercise for cancer survivors. Despite this, the majority of survivors don't exercise and no evidence-based exercise services are routinely available for Victorian survivors. This project will develop, implement and evaluate a sustainable model of care to improve the health and wellbeing of cancer survivors through translation of best practice exercise delivered in the community.
- **Project Title: Gippsland Survivorship Program: improving care coordination, service delivery and health outcomes for people with cancer and carers**  
**Lead Applicant:** Dr Mahesh Iddawela  
**Organisation:** Gippsland Integrated Cancer Service  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** Shared care models between cancer specialists and primary care providers are recognised to benefit survivors, carers, clinicians and the health system in managing cancer survivorship needs. Shared care is especially important for rural populations who experience poor access to oncology services. This project will establish a survivorship program in the Gippsland region. Its focus will be on establishing the processes, infrastructure and communication pathways to support the program, and education for survivors and clinicians which aligns with chronic disease self-management frameworks.
- **Project Title: Implementing and evaluating a shared-care model of survivorship care for prostate cancer patients in the West – a Western Health and North Western Primary Health Network collaboration**  
**Lead Applicant:** Ms Ilana Hornung  
**Organisation:** Western Health  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** This multi-strategy project will implement and evaluate a shared-care model of survivorship care for prostate cancer patients in the West. The patient care component of the model was successfully trialled in the recent ProCare RCT. Risk-stratified patients who have completed active treatment will be transitioned to a model of shared-care and offered a schedule of follow-up visits with GPs and hospital-based specialists. The Project will include initiatives designed to strengthen the role of general practice in survivorship support. It will be conducted as a partnership between Western Health and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network.
- **Project Title: Survive and thrive: a community model empowering cancer survivors to regain strength, health and quality of life**  
**Lead Applicant:** Ms Kerry James  
**Organisation:** Castlemaine Health and Castlemaine District Community Health  
**Duration:** 18 months  
**Description:** Cancer rates have increased significantly in the Mt. Alexander Shire over the past 15 years. Accessibility to survivorship care is a significant barrier for rural cancer survivors. Castlemaine Health along with Castlemaine District Community Health provide a range of allied health and nursing services that can support survivors' goals. This project aims to strengthen links, build capacity and combine resources into a multidisciplinary program specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals following cancer treatment. Cancer survivors are empowered to manage their recovery and form ongoing links with other community based services.

- Project Title: Southern Mallee and Northern Loddon Cancer Survivorship Partnership Project**  
**Lead Applicant:** Ms Janice Radrekusa  
**Organisation:** Murray Primary Health Network  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** The Southern Mallee and Northern Loddon Cancer Survivorship Partnership Project aims to build capacity, enhance continuity of cancer survivorship care, and improve patient access across the acute, primary health and community sectors in Southern Mallee and Northern Loddon regions by implementing a whole-of-system approach to improve patient outcomes.
- Project Title: Pathways to Wellness: shared care after colorectal cancer**  
**Lead Applicant:** Ms Katherine Simons  
**Organisation:** North Eastern Melbourne Integrated Cancer Service  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** New models of follow-up are required for increasing numbers of Victorians surviving bowel cancer. Two hospitals, GP organisations and consumers will design a model of shared care follow-up. Survivors will receive: coordinated shared care between hospital and GP; assistance with physical, emotional, and practical needs; support to improve their health and reduce their risk of cancer recurrence due to smoking, diet and exercise risk factors; and support for carers. This project aims to implement a model with potential application across eastern and wider GP network regions.
- Project Title: Breaking the barriers for primary care in survivorship care in allogenic stem cell transplant: improving access and accessibility for primary care physicians**  
**Lead Applicant:** Prof David Ritchie  
**Organisation:** Melbourne Health  
**Duration:** 36 months  
**Description:** The Royal Melbourne Hospital has a world class bone marrow transplant unit. As part of our commitment to caring for our patients after we have established a survivorship clinic, which seeks to identify ways by which patients can maintain/improve their health and return to as full a recovery as possible after transplant. We have found that many of the important steps for returning to good health are best provided by primary practitioners (GPs). This project seeks to improve the way in which the hospital works with primary practitioners in order to deliver the best survivorship care in the best location.