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# Glossary and key terms

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| CALD | Culturally and linguistically diverse |
| Cancer continuum | The full spectrum of cancer control services from prevention and early detection efforts, through diagnosis and treatment, to rehabilitation and support services for people living with cancer and/or palliative care. |
| Clinical guidelines | Clinical guidelines are a graded set of recommendations to assist clinical decision-making or service planning based on best available research.  |
| Clinical pathway | A clinical pathway explicitly states that the goals and key elements of care are based on clinical guidelines, and best available evidence. It acknowledges patients expectations by facilitating communication, coordinating roles and sequencing the activities of the multidisciplinary care team, patients and their families; by documenting, monitoring and evaluating variances; and by providing the necessary resources and outcomes. The aim of a clinical pathway is to improve the quality of care, reduce risks, and increase patient satisfaction and increase efficiency in the use of resources. |
| Clinical trial | Research conducted with the patient’s permission, which usually involves a comparison of two or more treatments or diagnostic methods. The aim is to gain better understanding of the underlying disease process and/or methods to treat it. A clinical trial is conducted with rigorous scientific method for determining the effectiveness of a proposed treatment. |
| Consumer or health consumers | People who use health services, patients, families, carers and other support people. This includes those who have used a health service in the past or potential users of the service. |
| Consumer representatives | Someone who voices consumer perspectives and takes part in the decision-making process on behalf of consumers. This person may be appropriately trained, have experience, undergo training and be supported to advocate for consumers. Alternatively, a consumer representative may be accountable to an organisation or association and represent a certain viewpoint.  |
| Consumer engagement | Used to reflect an approach that involves the development of meaningful relationships with a shared focus. This is underpinned by trust and mutual respect, a commitment by all involved and active two-way dialogue. The term consumer engagement indicates action that is more than simply taking part.  |
| Community | A group of people sharing a common interest (e.g. cultural, social, political, health, economic interests) but not necessarily a geographic association. Different types of communities are likely to have different perspectives and approaches to their involvement in research.  |
| Community member  | A member of a community |
| CUP | Cancer of unknown primary |
| Epidemiology | The study of the patterns and causes of health and disease in populations, and the application of this study to improve health. |
| Epithelium | The cells that make up the internal and external surfaces of the body, for example, skin, inside of lungs, ovaries. |
| Familial | Indicates that a condition that can be inherited from through the generations of a family through one or more genes. |
| Genomics | Genomics is the study of genes and what they do. Research has shown that cancers are caused by gene mutations, which then cause abnormal cell growth or resistance to standard cancer treatments. Researchers study genes to understand why some people have cancer and why some people do not, and to develop better treatments.  |
| Health care | Describes services provided to individuals or communities to promote, maintain, monitor, or restore health. The health care system has multiple components including health promotion, primary health care, specialist services and hospitals. |
| Metastasis | Also known as a secondary cancer. A cancer that has spread from another part of the body. |
| Molecular tumour board (MTB) | A treatment planning approach in which a number of doctors who are experts in different specialties (disciplines) review and discuss the medical condition and treatment options of a patient. Similar to a multidisciplinary team meeting, but tends not to consider the patient’s psychological and social needs. (Also see MDM – multidisciplinary team meeting) |
| MRFF | The Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) is a $20 billion long-term investment supporting Australian health and medical research. The MRFF aims to transform health and medical research and innovation to improve lives, build the economy and contribute to health system sustainability. |
| Multidisciplinary team meeting (MDM) | Multidisciplinary meetings are a regularly scheduled meeting of core and invited team members for the purpose of prospective treatment and care planning of newly diagnosed cancer patients as well as those requiring review of treatment plans or palliative care. (Also see MTB – Molecular Tumour Board) |
| Neoadjuvant therapy  | Treatment given before the main treatment to increase the chances of a cure. |
| NHMRC | The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funds high quality health and medical research to build research capability, support researchers, encourage the translation of research into better health outcomes and promote the highest ethical standards for health and medical research. |
| Pathologist | A person who studies diseases to understand their nature and cause. Pathologists examine biopsies under a microscope to diagnose cancer and other diseases. |
| PBS | Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme |
| People affected by cancer | People who have had a personal experience of cancer, including patients, people living with cancer, cancer survivors, caregivers and family members. |
| Prevalence  | The number or proportion (of cases, instances, etc) present in a population at a given time. |
| Prevention | Action to reduce or eliminate the onset, causes, complications or recurrence of disease or ill health. |
| Primary care | Primary Care is a sub-component of the broader primary health care system. Primary care is provided by a health care professional who is a client's first point of entry into the health system (for example: a general practitioner, practice nurse, community nurse, or community based allied health worker). Primary care is practised widely in nursing and allied health, but predominately in general practice. |
| Priority driven research | Research undertaken in identified priority areas.  An area might be identified as a priority for a variety of reasons, including a relative lack of research in the area in comparison to the impact that the particular cancer has on society. |
| Psycho-oncology | Concerned with the psychological, social, behavioural, and ethical aspects of cancer. This subspecialty addresses the two major psychological dimensions of cancer: the psychological responses of patients to cancer at all stages of the disease and that of their families and caretakers; and the psychological, behavioural and social factors that may influence the disease process. |
| Public | Used to collectively refer to consumers and community members.  |
| Quality of life | An individual’s overall appraisal of their situation and subjective sense of wellbeing. Quality of life encompasses symptoms of disease and side effects of treatment, functional capacity, social interactions and relationships, and occupational functioning. Key psychological aspects include subjective distress, satisfaction with treatment, existential issues, and the impact of illness and treatment on sexuality and body image. |
| Randomised controlled trial | A trial in which participants are randomly allocated to receive the new treatment or the standard treatment (the control). |
| Research | An original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight.  |
| Research participation | Refers to people who partake in a research project such as clinical trials, surveys and focus groups. Ethics and individual consent is required before participation starts. |
| Survivorship | In cancer, survivorship focuses on the health and life of a person with cancer beyond the diagnosis and treatment phases. Survivorship includes issues related to follow-up care, late effects of treatment, second cancers, and quality of life. Family members, friends, and caregivers are also part of the survivorship experience. |
| Tissue biopsy | Examination of tissue that has been removed from the body under a microscope so any abnormalities in the cells can be seen. |
| UMCCR | The University of Melbourne Centre for Cancer Research (UMCCR) brings together university leaders committed to improving the outcomes and quality of life for people affected by cancer. [mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/umccr](http://mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/umccr)  |
| VCCC | The Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC) is Australia’s first comprehensive cancer centre providing a multidisciplinary, integrated approach to cancer research, education and clinical care.The 10 alliance partners represent a critical mass of cancer expertise and resources. The fundamental premise is that a comprehensive cancer centre of integrated organisations will gain far greater benefits in cancer more quickly than an individual organisation could achieve alone.[viccompcancerctr.org](https://www.viccompcancerctr.org/) |
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