

PROMPT-Care: eHealth facilitating timely person-centred care to every cancer patient

Flagship Program This Case Study is Attributed to

Flagship 2 – Policy & Practice (T2/T3)

Translational Pipeline Focus

T2/T3

Type of Cancer(s)

~Not Site-Specific Cancer

Location(s) Where Research is Based

South West Sydney Local Health District & Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Summary

Cancer patients experience a high level of distress which is often not adequately addressed during a standard consultation. Indeed, health providers often do not accurately pick up psychosocial issues the patient may be experiencing which can ultimately result in an escalation of patient symptoms. Therefore, it is of critical importance that cancer patients are provided with the tools to self-report and for that information to be accessible to health providers in real time.

PROMPT-Care (Patient Reported Outcome Measures for Personalised Treatment and Care) addresses this unmet need by providing a platform where patients can self-report. Through a monthly electronic survey, PROMPT Care captures information about a patient's symptoms, distress and unmet needs. The data from the surveys alerts the care team in real-time of any "red-flag" issues thereby assisting clinical decisions about patient treatment and management. This ultimately improves the care the patient receives. In addition, the data received from the survey directs patients to resources which can assist in patient self-management.

The Contribution, Impact or Benefit to Community

The PROMPT-Care system was developed collaboratively by clinicians and researchers from South West Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) and Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD). It has been extensively researched and demonstrated to be highly acceptable and feasible and both LHDs have now committed to implementing PROMPT-Care into routine care for all cancer patients. This will ultimately help to provide better value care whilst also empowering patients to help themselves.

Published research has shown that systematic collection of PROs and feedback to the care team improves a number of important patient outcomes, including extending survival of patients with advanced cancer. This is likely because issues

can be addressed before they have time to escalate into more serious ones, leading patients to tolerate their treatment for longer, with the benefit of this being realised in longer survival.

PROMPT-Care has the potential to make a significant impact on the treatment of cancer patients. Patients reporting on their symptoms and wellbeing prior to scheduled appointment times ensures that 'red flag' issues are addressed in a timely manner, with the early identification of issues helping the care team be informed and respond quickly to address the issues before they escalate. In addition to assisting health care providers to ensure the highest quality care, PROMPT-Care also empowers patients to take control of their own health. If the system flags an issue e.g. anxiety as being above threshold, the patient is sent an email with links to resources together with a notification that a member of the care team has been informed and will be in contact. This is used for patients who are currently undergoing treatment as well as those patients who are post-treatment and attending appointments on a less regular basis.

The PROMPT-Care study results show that younger patients who actively engaged with PROMPT-Care, that is they completed at least four of their monthly assessments over a 6-month period, were significantly less likely to present to emergency departments than control patients. This is important as it highlights the value of such a system in reducing patient burden but also potentially the costs to the healthcare system through keeping patients out of emergency departments.

With the growing number of cancer survivors, the current largely specialist follow-up care model is not sustainable. Routine PRO collection through PROMPT-Care facilitates evaluation of longer-term patient outcomes, morbidities and needs, potentially reducing the need for face-to-face specialist follow-up especially for patients reporting low level needs. PROMPT-Care can enhance care efficiency and reduce care variation, with PROs informing risk-stratified, algorithm-informed care, triaging to the most appropriate service(s), and empowering patients to self-manage. Applied nationally, there is significant potential for reduced patient burden, health cost savings and reduced waiting times through freeing up of unnecessary follow-up appointments.

The PROMPT-Care system is fully integrated with patient medical records and this real-time integration has not been achieved by others in Australia or internationally. The success of the trial has resulted in many cancer centres across Australia expressing their interest in implementing the program. This potentially means that PROMPT-Care could benefit cancer patients nationwide if it were adopted.

Results from our research have shown that patients find the survey highly acceptable and clinical teams are finding the reports useful. Currently, the PROMPT-Care system caters for people with English literacy skills only. Investigations are now underway to determine how to implement PROMPT-Care

into our non-English speaking communities as well as with groups with low literacy levels and limited computer/internet access.

PROMPT-Care has won a number of awards including the 2018 Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) Quality Improvement Award - Healthcare Measurement; the 2017 South West Sydney Research Hub annual prize; the 2017 South Western Sydney Local Health District Translational Research Award, awarded for having the greatest translational impact in the health service; and the 2017 South Western Sydney Local Health District Board Award, selected from all award applicants across all categories.

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