A healthy lifestyle coaching program for cancer survivors

Cancer Council Australia and international cancer organisations recommend that after treatment, cancer survivors should be as physically active as possible, eat a healthy, low saturated fat diet, and achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Many cancer survivors have indicated they would like support in adopting a healthier lifestyle after their cancer experience to assist in preventing a recurrence of disease.

The Healthy Living after Cancer (HLaC) project is evaluating the integration of an evidence based lifestyle intervention for cancer survivors into the existing Cancer Council 13 11 20 service. The program offers telephone based lifestyle interventions for adults who have completed cancer treatment with curative intent.

Who is participating?

Adults treated for any type of cancer and who have completed treatment are able to take part at no cost and there is no limit on time since diagnosis.

What does the program involve?

Participants receive 12 free coaching calls, delivered by experienced Cancer Council Nurses over a six month period. People are encouraged to set goals for physical activity, healthy diet and weight management and are provided advice and support to develop behaviour change skills to meet these goals.

How is the program going so far?

They are seeing some fantastic preliminary results! Data below is from the participating Cancer Councils (SA, NSW, Victoria and WA).
Testimonials

“I found this program a wonderful help in moving forward in survivorship. It offered achievable goals and support to move forward in my wellbeing and acceptance of the new me.” Wendy, HLaC participant

“We recently had a 45yr old breast cancer survivor complete the program. She joined the program to regain some fitness, reduce fatigue and lose weight. Her weight lowered from 83 to 74kg, her BMI from 31-28 and her daily physical activity increased from an average of 19 minutes to 37 minutes per day.” Bonnie, Cancer Council Research Assistant

“One of the biggest rewards for me is connecting with survivors who have endured lengthy treatment, faced many obstacles, and are now able to steer their health in a more positive direction.” Polly, Cancer Council Nurse

For more information

Please help spread the word far and wide as recruitment continues with the aim to reach out to as many cancer survivors as possible.

For more information about the Healthy Living after Cancer program call 13 11 20, email askanurse@cancersa.org.au or people can register online by visiting our website https://www.cancersa.org.au/information/a-z-index/healthy-living-after-cancer.

Update on the Under Our Roof accommodation provided by The Hospital Research Foundation

The objective is to have these beautiful new homes provide a home away from home for country cancer patients and their families at what is a stressful time of their lives.

The Hospital Research Foundation has been in operation for over 51 years raising funds for health and medical research and patient care for hospitals in SA.

A few years ago a couple of senior oncologists/haematologists who work across The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Royal Adelaide Hospital highlighted to the Hospital Research Foundation the serious shortfall of country cancer patient accommodation in Adelaide – particularly for families.

With some incredible fundraising partners they were able to purchase a property at Woodville West and begin the first Under Our Roof project. The two 3 bedroom homes built by Scott Salisbury Homes were opened at the end of 2015 – providing much needed accommodation for country patients (and families) traveling to Adelaide for treatment. The site was chosen for its proximity to schools and other community services ideal for families who often need to relocate for 2 months at a time for specialty cancer treatment.
The properties have been heavily booked by people from around the state who meet the PATS criteria. They are an accredited accommodation provider through the SA Health Patient Assistance Transport Scheme and the NSW IPTAAS scheme (Isolated Patients Transport and Accommodation Assistance Scheme). The Schemes provide a nightly reimbursement of $40 to the Foundation (once approved) which allows families to stay in the homes almost free of charge (supply of linen attracts a small charge).

The Hospital Research Foundation has been most fortunate to have exceptional support from the community as well as generous individuals and companies to complete the first project. They are now focused on building the much needed second Under Our Roof homes which they hope to locate between the QEH and new RAH. The Hospital Research Foundation hopes to have the second site purchased and the project underway, before the end of 2017.

You can read more about the homes and the facilities they offer to SA country families [https://www.hospitalresearch.com.au/get-involved/under-our-roof/] and details for patients [https://www.hospitalresearch.com.au/get-involved/under-our-roof/information-for-patients/].

There has been wonderful feedback from the families who have called these houses their home over the last 12 months. Maria and Daniel [https://www.hospitalresearch.com.au/a-home-away-from-home-for-whyalla-family/], Francesca [https://www.hospitalresearch.com.au/haven-family-together-roof/].

Aboriginal Community & Consumer Engagement Strategy & CHSALHN Aboriginal Health Experts by Experience Register

The Aboriginal Community and Consumer Engagement (ACCE) Strategy was developed to assist CHSALHN implement culturally respectful and meaningful community and consumer engagement in Aboriginal health care.

The ACCE Strategy recognises the excellent consultation work that has occurred in the past and builds a future platform to increase Aboriginal community participation. At its heart, the ACCE Strategy creates local opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal community, carers, patients and consumers to engage in CHSALHN business.

The CHSALHN Aboriginal Health Experts by Experience Register is the flagship of the ACCE Strategy and is a register of Aboriginal consumers, patients, parents, carers or significant others who have self-nominated to be involved in meaningful engagement in public health and health service planning to improve the health outcomes of their families and communities.

The Register provides a database of Aboriginal consumers from across South Australia who are interested in providing feedback to CHSALHN and other health organisations around planning and delivery of culturally appropriate health services. It acknowledges the lived experience of Aboriginal people and the wealth of knowledge that comes with their life experiences.
People who join the Register can choose their level of involvement from being informed about CHSALHN business, to providing feedback on health services and policies, being consulted or becoming an Expert by Experience consumer representatives.

The Aboriginal Health Experts by Experience Register is the first in SA Health and has recruited over 160 participants since being established in November 2014.

All representatives registering can nominate as an Expert by Experience and will have the opportunity to access orientation and training as well as opportunities to meet with other Expert by Experience members and participate in health areas of interest.

Of those who have registered as Expert by Experience members, areas of interest, skill and knowledge include (but are not limited to) chronic disease prevention and management, alcohol and substance misuse, maternal and infant care, health planning and workforce development. Feedback provided by members of the Experts by Experience Register is used to inform the development of health services within CHSALHN.

Artwork depicting the Tree of Life from the Dunjiba Community Council’s Women’s Shed that is featured on the front cover of the ACCE strategy

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