



Out with Cancer: LGBTQI+ experiences of cancer survivorship and care

Sexual and gender minorities, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+), represent an “ignored epidemic” and a “growing and medically underserved population” in cancer care. Findings suggest LGBTQI+ communities experience a disproportionate cancer burden, and face unique psychosocial challenges, such as higher rates of cancer related distress and sexual concerns, lower levels of family support, difficulties in accessing general health care or cancer services, gaps in patient-provider communication and lower satisfaction with cancer care. Recently, the American Society of Clinical Oncology recognised this health disparity and concluded there is “insufficient knowledge about the health care needs, outcomes, lived experiences and effective interventions to improve outcomes” for LGBTQI+ populations. *As a result, health care providers and policy makers are ill-equipped to provide culturally-competent advice or assistance to LGBTI cancer survivors and their families.*

This interdisciplinary project will address this gap in research through investigating the following aims:

1. Identify and understand the complex intersection of gender, sexual identity, age, and other categories of difference, in relation to the cancer survivorship and care experiences of LGBTQI+ individuals.
2. Ascertain barriers and facilitators to the delivery of culturally competent cancer communication and care to LGBTQI+ patients through an audit of guidelines and resources, and via the perspective of service providers.
3. Synthesise and implement these findings into tailored support materials for LGBTQI+ survivors and carers, and Australian LGBTQI+ cancer best practice and policy recommendations

The project is funded by an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage grant, and based at the Translational Health Research Institute, Western Sydney University, in partnership with UNSW, UTS, Monash, La Trobe and Melbourne universities.

Partner Organisations: The Cancer Council NSW, Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia, National LGBT Health Alliance, ACON, Breast Cancer Network Australia, Sydney Children's Hospital Network and CANTEEN.

To find out more or take part in the study, go to:

www.westernsydney.edu.au/outwithcancer

Chief investigators: Jane Ussher, Janette Perz, Martha Hickey, Suzanne Chambers, Gary Dowsett, Kerry Robinson, Antoinette Anazodo, Ian Davis, Chloe Parton, Fiona McDonald.