

2020 Research Awards

Project Title:

A Telehealth Cancer-Related Fatigue Clinic Model for Cancer Survivors: A Pilot Randomised Controlled Trial (The TCRF Trial)

Lead Investigator:

Dr Rahul Ladwa

Medical Oncologist, PA Hospital
Senior Lecturer, UQ



Collaborative Project Team:

R Chan, E Pinkham, B Brown, S McPhail, C Escalante, P Yates

Project Summary:

There are currently 1.1 million cancer survivors in Australia. This is expected to increase to 1.9 million over the next 20 years. Recent research reports cancer-related fatigue (CRF) as a one of the most distressing symptoms experienced by at least 1 in 3 cancer patients, affecting a patient's ability to engage in work, leisure activities and meaningful social relationships. In 2015, about 45% of cancer survivors were not working, resulting in a reduction of \$1.7 billion to the Australian national income. Although CRF is not the sole reason for loss in productivity, addressing CRF can help patients and carers return to work and normal life after cancer.

To the best of our knowledge, there are no CRF Clinics offered in Australia. Given the high prevalence and the significant impact of CRF, there is an urgency for us to develop a model of care that can address this problem.

The aim of this study is to develop and test the feasibility and acceptability of a telehealth CRF clinic model of care. This study will include 60 patients experiencing CRF who have completed treatment at the Princess Alexandra Hospital and have access to tele or videoconferencing. Patients will randomly be allocated to receive usual care or usual care plus a 1-hour telehealth clinic with a trained nurse.

Research Benefits:

The number of cancer survivors will increase from 1.1 to 1.9 million in 20 years. 1 in 3 patients experiences CRF limiting their engagement in work, leisure and social relationships. In 2015, a \$1.7 billion loss in productivity was attributed to the 46% of patients not working. Although CRF was not the sole contributor to this loss, addressing CRF can help patients and carers return to work and life after cancer. This trial focuses on reducing fatigue and symptoms (e.g., pain, sleep disturbance), which may reduce hospital admissions and patient- and carer- productivity loss.

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