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# Remote Chemotherapy Service - Tele-chemo

Initiative Type

Service Improvement

Status

Sustained

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## Summary

A Service Level Agreement is in the process of being drawn up between Central West Hospital and Health Service (CWHHS) and Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS). Funding has been secured by Central West for four (4) nursing staff to attend the RBWH for a week of intense training in addition to the required Anti Neoplastic Drug Administration Course that is self-directed via i-Learn.

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Monthly meetings between a team at RBWH and CWHHS have been set to discuss progress and ensure good communication between sites. Recommended Cytotoxic training for all CWHHS staff has been presented at the recent Learning and Development meeting and will be rolled out using the Learning Management System and supported by Centralised Integrated Regional Cancer Services (CIRCS). Recommended updated procedures in relation to but not limited to cytotoxic waste, administration or oral chemotherapy, appropriate PPE and management of febrile neutropenia is in the process of being introduced to CWHHS.

#### Key dates

Oct 2017

Jun 2018

#### Implementation sites

Central West HHS - Longreach Hospital, Metro North HHS – Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital

#### Partnerships

Telehealth Support Unit, Healthcare Improvement Unit, Clinical Excellence Queensland

## Key Contacts

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## Aim

- Increase access to low risk chemotherapy treatment services at a hospital facility closer to home for Central West Hospital and Health Service (CWHHS) cancer patients.
- Increase access to specialist medical oncology services and support via telehealth services.
- Increase scope of cancer care practice for rural medical, nursing and allied health workforce.

## Benefits

- Improved patient centred care.
- Local access to specialised services for oncology patients.
- Reduced emotional and financial cost of travel and accommodation for CWHHS and patients.
- Increased staff training and education in cytotoxic management, resulting in reduced clinical isolation.

## Background

Within CWHSS there is an exponential growth in the number of community member receiving or recovering from chemotherapy treatments and being provided medical oncology support. In 2011-2012 15 people were identified as receiving chemotherapy treatment outside the district with an increase to 55 in 2016-2017. The specialist services are located in regional cancer centres, primarily based on the Queensland coast, resulting in long distance travel and isolation from family and community for periods of time for any Central West cancer patient.

## Solutions Implemented

- A district wide training proposal has been submitted and awaiting executive perusal and approval.
- Two of four funded nurses have commenced their chemo supervision training and the funds for this have been rolled over into CWHHS.
- The hospital will send a further two nurses for training in 2019 in order to keep staff up to

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date.

## **Evaluation and Results**

The implementation of this remote chemotherapy service will have a huge positive impact on patients quality of life, allowing many of them more treatment options, local family support, palliative treatment options as well as enhancing health care professionals knowledge and skills on cancer care services including, but not limited to, chemotherapy administration, cytotoxic management and telehealth utilisation.

## **Lessons Learnt**

It is important to get plans in place early in the project as there are often time delays with getting changes reviewed, approved and implemented due to staffing and competing HHS priorities.

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