

Cancer Council Queensland provides a broad range of services to the community. These services aim to:

- Support people diagnosed with cancer and their families and friends
- Encourage children and adults to make healthy lifestyle choices and use available screening services
- Educate health professionals about the latest developments in treatment and research
- Improve the understanding and outcomes of cancer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Advocate for systemic changes to improve cancer control and support for Queenslanders.

Accommodation services

Our lodges in Brisbane, Townsville and Rockhampton provide free self-contained homes away from home for patients and their families who travel long distances for cancer treatment. During 2009, our accommodation lodges made the following contributions to the Queensland community:

- Charles Wanstall Apex Lodge (Brisbane) provided 8,156 nights of accommodation to 582 cancer patients and their families and carers.
- Gluyas Rotary Lodge (Townsville) provided 6,603 nights of accommodation to 542 patients and their families and carers
- Cancer Council Queensland's two units in Rockhampton provided 313 nights of accommodation to 293 patients and their families and carers.

Practical support

As a result of being unable to work due to their cancer diagnosis and treatment and the increased costs associated with diagnosis, people with cancer often require financial support. They also often require access to wigs and/or turbans to use when their hair has fallen out as a result of chemotherapy. During 2009, Cancer Council Queensland:

- Provided financial assistance to 1,500 Queenslanders affected by cancer
- Supported 876 people, who had lost their hair as a result of cancer treatment, with a financial contribution towards the cost of a wig
- Provided \$32,550 in Seize the Day study grant awards to young Queenslanders affected by cancer.

Cancer Council Helpline

Cancer Council Helpline plays a key role in being the first point of access for Queenslanders seeking information and support about cancer. During 2009, trained Cancer Council Helpline staff responded to around 20,000 calls from the general public, people diagnosed with cancer, health professionals and family and friends of cancer patients. Their reasons for contacting the Cancer Council Helpline included:

Practical support for people with cancer	37%
General cancer information	32%
Emotional support	13%
Cancer treatment information	10%
Prevention and early detection information	8%

During 2009, the Helpline also extended the geographical scope of its team through investments in new technologies and now operates in both Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

Counselling

A team of psychologists in the Cancer Counselling Service provide telephone or face-to-face counselling to cancer patients and their families experiencing distress or difficulty coping. The main reasons for being referred to the service include adjusting to cancer, bereavement and anticipatory grief, anxiety, depression and family relationships. During 2009, the Cancer Counselling Service:

- Connected with more than 800 cancer patients to provide telephone and face-to-face counselling to help ease their distress. This was an increase of 16 per cent from 2008's results. More than 150 of these patients were referred as part of the Beating the Blues After Cancer project, a randomised control trial comparing minimal contact or 'self-help' self-management materials versus a telephone-based cognitive behavioural intervention delivered by a psychologist
- Recorded more than 50 per cent of counselling referrals for Queenslanders from regional, rural and remote areas. Of these, 121 people received face-to-face counselling in our regional offices, including 54 on the Gold Coast, 18 in Townsville, 39 in Cairns and 10 on the Sunshine Coast
- Recorded 64 per cent of referrals (allocated to either service) for telephone support and 36 per cent for face-to-face support.

Peer support

During 2009, volunteers worked in a range of roles in Cancer Connect, Breast Cancer Support Services and the Hospital-based Volunteer Program to support people living with cancer. Peer

support helps the patient and their family to adjust and cope.

During 2009, Cancer Council Queensland:

- Linked 625 women with breast cancer and 122 people with other cancers with a peer supporter who has experienced a similar cancer diagnosis themselves
- Maintained contact with 143 cancer support groups across the state and provided extensive advice and support to more than 40 of these groups. Cancer Council Queensland also provided training to around 50 prostate support group facilitators to assist them in managing and running their support groups
- Facilitated 82 support groups across the state with more than 2,050 attendees.

Information and resources

More than 1.4 million resources (patient education brochures, booklets, DVDs, posters and stickers) were produced for those affected by cancer across the state.

Advocacy: Giving a voice to patients

Advocacy is crucial to influencing the policy and legislative framework within government and gathering public support to improve cancer control.

During 2009, we continued to engage with the Queensland Government and Queensland Health to advocate on matters related to cancer control.

The outcomes of our work resulted in the Queensland Government's creation of a \$15 million three-year grant scheme to support the development of accommodation facilities for regional patients. Under this scheme, we were successful in securing approval to proceed to stage two of the funding process and received funding to develop plans for new facilities in Cairns and Toowoomba.

Other outcomes during 2009 included passing of legislation to ban smoking in cars carrying young people fewer than 16 years of age and a Queensland Health review of the Queensland Statewide Cancer Treatment Services Plan 2008-17, in response to our request for resources and funding to enable timely implementation of the plan.

Importantly, our advocacy helped to improve outcomes for cancer patients and the community, enhancing awareness of our services and advancing cancer control.

Prevention and early detection

The key to cancer control is through activities aimed at raising awareness of the simple measures people can take to protect themselves and maintain their health, such as quitting smoking, using sun protection and skin self examination and participating in cancer screening. This was achieved through advertising campaigns, partnerships with other organisations, community education and initiatives. During 2009, Cancer Council Queensland:

- Delivered 500 presentations to more than 13,400 Queenslanders through the Community Speakers Program. The presentations covered a range of topics around healthy lifestyle, cancer prevention and early detection
- Produced 2,500 copies of Kidskin to be distributed to every primary school in Queensland. Kidskin is a comprehensive skin cancer prevention resource containing parent information and classroom activities that align with the classroom curriculum for primary schools. Kidskin provides primary school teachers with current, interesting and educational information to communicate the importance of SunSmart behaviours to Queensland children
- Successfully delivered Quit Educator training to 77 health professionals throughout Queensland. This training equipped health professionals with the skills to deliver smoking cessation courses and brief intervention counselling with individual clients or community groups.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives

Cancer Council Queensland expanded Indigenous cancer control activities and initiated new programs during 2009. Education and training was provided to Indigenous health care workers and others who care for Indigenous people with cancer in communities across Queensland. This was achieved through:

- Facilitating a cancer course for nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care workers from across the state
- Growing the Indigenous health care workers network to 90 registrations, with network participants given direct access to our education programs, resources and scholarships
- Launching Wanem Morphine – an informational booklet for Creole speaking Indigenous Queenslanders that looks at cancer pain management
- Funding received through the Federal Government's Indigenous Tobacco Control Initiative to help build the capacity of Queensland Indigenous communities to support pregnant women to quit smoking.

Education for health professionals

Cancer Council Queensland continues to take the lead in delivering up-to-date, evidence-based education and training. Topics in training conducted during 2009 included information about advances in treatment, biological and targeted therapies, palliative care, symptom management, psychosocial care and resources and the services of Cancer Council Queensland. Health professionals took this information back to their communities to benefit other professionals and people with cancer and their families. During 2009, Cancer Council Queensland:

- Continued its support of the Oncology Nurses Group and Allied Health Professional Oncology Group, welcoming 285 health professionals to the 32nd Annual Oncology Nurses Group Conference in Brisbane
- Educated 117 health professionals about cancer care by providing eight specialised courses and programs throughout the year
- Provided \$58,595 in study and travel grants, enabling 12 health professionals to participate in professional development activities in Australia and abroad.