

1 Appropriate to involve a multidisciplinary team to consider effective evidence-based anti-cancer and supportive therapies in the management of patients with metastatic breast cancer. A key contact person should be agreed to support communication and coordination of patient-centred care.

WHAT THIS PRACTICE IS ABOUT

This practice highlights the importance of having a team of health professionals involved in the care of people with metastatic breast cancer.

Best practice care for people with metastatic breast cancer is likely to involve a number of health professionals and services. Care may involve different treatments, participation in a clinical trial, managing symptoms and providing support. Everyone's needs are different and can change over time. What is right for one person may not be right for another.

It is important that a team of health professionals with different areas of expertise is involved in the treatment and care of people with metastatic breast cancer. This is called a 'multidisciplinary team'. The team will usually involve one or more specialist cancer doctors, a nurse and one or more health professionals involved in providing support for people with advanced cancer. The team may also include the person's GP and an expert in providing culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people¹ or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The multidisciplinary team considers individual needs and preferences and considers suitable treatment and care options. Not everyone in the team is involved in the care of every patient. Different health professionals might become involved as a person's symptoms and needs change.

When a team of health professionals is involved in the care of someone with metastatic breast cancer, it is important to have a key contact person. This may be the GP, breast care nurse or another member of the team. The key contact person acts as a link between the individual and the multidisciplinary team, helping to provide information, answer questions and coordinate care.

WHY THIS PRACTICE MIGHT BE IMPORTANT FOR YOU

If you have metastatic breast cancer, it is important that you receive the treatment that is right for you, and that you and your family have the support you need. Your treatment options and support needs may change over time. Having a multidisciplinary team involved in your care means you can consider all available options and access the care and support you need.

It is important for you to know which health professionals are involved in your care and who your key contact person is. This can help you ask questions and let your team know what is important for you.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Who is in my multidisciplinary team?

Which health professionals are most relevant to my care at the moment and why?

Who is my key contact person? How can I contact them if I have questions?

1. A culturally appropriate health professional may be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker, Health Practitioner, or Hospital Liaison Officer.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the **Cancer Australia Statement – Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer** and to access supporting resources, visit canceraustralia.gov.au/statement



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Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer

Metastatic breast cancer is cancer that has spread from the breast to other parts of the body. It is also known as advanced breast cancer or secondary breast cancer. People with metastatic breast cancer experience a range of emotional, physical and practical challenges.

The aim of treatment and care for people with metastatic breast cancer is to control the growth and spread of the cancer, relieve symptoms and help people live as well as possible. There is evidence that approaches to treatment and care vary across Australia.

It is important that everyone with metastatic breast cancer receives evidence-based information, treatment and support that reflect their individual needs and preferences. This includes avoiding treatments that may not provide meaningful benefits or may cause harm.

ABOUT THE STATEMENT

The aim of the *Cancer Australia Statement – Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer* is to reduce unwarranted variation in the treatment and care of people with metastatic breast cancer in Australia.

The Statement focuses on 10 practices that have been identified as appropriate or inappropriate in the treatment and care of people with metastatic breast cancer, to help them to live as well as possible. This includes providing the treatment and care that is most likely to benefit the patient, and avoiding treatments that are unlikely to help, or that may be harmful.

Not every practice is relevant for every person diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. The practice(s) relevant to an individual will depend on their diagnosis and situation.

HOW WAS THE STATEMENT DEVELOPED?

The Statement is based on available national and international evidence and was developed with input from a range of experts and people affected by metastatic breast cancer. The Statement has the support of key clinical colleges, cancer and consumer organisations.

USING THE STATEMENT

The Statement aims to empower people with metastatic breast cancer and their families to make informed decisions about treatment and care that are right for them. A key part of informed decision making is to talk to health professionals and ask questions about available options for treatment, care and support.

You may wish to talk to your health professionals about which practices in the Statement are most relevant for you. Each practice includes a few questions that you may find helpful to guide conversations about your treatment and care options.

MORE INFORMATION

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