

update

Victorian MDM Quality Framework Project

project background

A statewide survey conducted in 2014 found variation in the functioning of cancer MDMs, but was not designed to assess and establish their quality.

A recommendation of the report was to establish a framework to enhance and support the quality, effectiveness and consistency of MDMs.

In response, the Victorian Integrated Cancer Services (VICS) provided funding for a project to develop a statewide quality framework for cancer MDMs by February 2017.

project aim

To develop a state wide quality framework (quality standards and monitoring methods) for cancer MDMs within 12 months

Project contact

For further information please contact
Zara Homes
MDM Project Manager
Zara.Homes@wcmics.org

progress

The first phase of the Cancer Multidisciplinary Team Meeting (MDM) Quality framework Project was to develop draft quality standards and measures based on available evidence. This included published guidelines from Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, in addition to an unpublished thesis recently completed by a Medical Oncologist on the structure and functioning of MDMs in Victoria (Devitt, 2016).

The Delphi technique was then used to gain expert consensus opinion from the Project Advisory Group on the standards and measures. The Delphi technique uses a series of structured questionnaires (also called 'rounds') that are sent individually to members of an expert group. The answers are aggregated to determine if there is consensus between group members. Statements that do not achieve consensus in the first round are sent back to the group in a subsequent round(s) until an appropriate level of consensus is achieved (de Villiers, de Villiers, & Kent, 2005; Hsu & Sandford, 2007). The questionnaires were distributed using the online survey software SurveyMonkey®, enabling participation from a wide range of stakeholders across a broad geographic area.

The testing phase of the project has recently been completed in health services across five Integrated Cancer Services (ICS). This included three regional ICS (BSWRICS, GRICS, Hume RICS) and two metropolitan ICS (NEMICS, WCMICS). Testers were ICS staff with appropriate MDM-auditing knowledge and/or experience who would be responsible for testing. Testers were provided with a data collection form and test instructions. An online meeting was held to enable questions to be answered prior to testing.

This phase aimed to determine if the measures associated with the quality standards accurately reflect whether or not the MDM achieves the standard and the practicality of measures. The ability of the health services to meet the quality standards was outside of the scope.

Determining the practicality of measures was multifaceted and included assessing:

- If the data is easily obtained from available sources (accessible)
- If the data is easily collected from available sources
- the resource requirements (staff time) associated with collecting, analysing and reporting data (cost-effectiveness and feasibility)

Although there were no specific definitions for these terms, the assessment of measures is based on the considered opinion of ICS staff members that have previous experience in auditing MDMs and are likely to be involved in auditing of the standards once implemented.

The project is on track for successful completion in February 2017. Implementation of the quality framework is not within the scope of this project, but is expected to occur in mid to late 2017.

project objectives

Progress to date

- To conduct a literature evaluation to identify data to support the development of a quality framework for cancer MDMs
- To develop a draft quality framework for cancer MDMs (this will include quality standards and method of monitoring MDMs against these standards) based on available literature
- To develop a final quality framework for cancer MDMs based on available literature and expert opinion
- To test the quality framework for cancer MDMs

next steps

- Complete assessment of testing outcomes and make amendments to the quality framework if required
- Endorsement of quality framework
- Development of overarching implementation principles

References

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- Devitt, B. (2016). *An examination of the dynamics and processes of multidisciplinary cancer meetings (MDMs)*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of Melbourne, Melbourne.
- Hsu, C.-C., & Sandford, B. A. (2007). The Delphi technique: making sense of consensus. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 12(10), 1-8.