



PRIORITY AREA: CANCER SURVIVORSHIP

# Rural Transition of Care

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Rural cancer survivors experience poorer outcomes than those in urban areas, including lower five-year survival rates for many cancers, poorer physical and mental health, lower quality of life and unmet supportive care needs. In the Travelling for Treatment study, led by Cancer Council Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland, two-thirds of rural cancer survivors reported that they did not receive a survivorship care plan at treatment completion. The study also highlighted substantial gaps in the receipt of information that is needed for rural cancer survivors to self-manage their long-term health and wellbeing (e.g., diet, exercise, signs & symptoms of recurrence, psychosocial support).

The Rural Transition of Care (R-ToC) project aims to address these gaps by understanding how best to deliver survivorship care to rural cancer survivors and caregivers, particularly at the transition of care from specialist treatment in a city centre to primary care and self-management in their local rural community.

## What is the study?

This project includes: (i) undertaking systematic literature reviews to identify post-treatment information needs of rural cancer survivors in Australia, and effective mechanisms for delivering survivorship care information; (ii) understanding facilitators and barriers to improving delivery of survivorship care information to rural cancer survivors from the perspective of healthcare professionals; and (iii) using evidence to design, and then test the effectiveness of a 'Rural Transition of Care Guideline' in improving survivorship care for rural cancer survivors and their caregivers.

## Why is this project important?

This project addresses gaps in care that may be contributing to poorer health outcomes for rural cancer survivors. Positive trial outcomes will be used to drive changes in healthcare that in turn will reduce health disparities across Australia.