



PRIORITY AREA: UNDERSTANDING CANCER DISPARITIES

# Understanding and Addressing Prostate Cancer Disparities in Rural and Remote Communities

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Men in rural areas face worse outcomes for prostate cancer than those in cities, with lower rates of prostate-specific antigen testing, prostate cancer diagnosis, and survival, but higher rates of advanced disease and mortality. The exact reasons for this remain unclear, hindering the development of effective solutions. This study aims to collect and analyse information to help guide evidence-based interventions to improve prostate cancer care, reduce disparities and enhance outcomes for men in rural communities.

## What is the study?

This study is a collaboration between Cancer Council Queensland, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the Daffodil Centre, Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia, Monash University, and Queensland University of Technology. It will use a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis will involve using modelled estimates from the Australian Cancer Atlas, Census data, and other national datasets to examine area-level patterns in prostate cancer outcomes, such as testing, diagnosis, treatment, and survival. Statistical and machine learning models will be used to identify geographical disparities and the factors influencing these outcomes. Qualitative methods will include online surveys, social media analysis, and interviews with individuals affected by prostate cancer. Surveys and interviews will gather personal experiences with cancer care, while social media mining will identify public narratives about disparities. Thematic analysis methods will integrate these insights with the quantitative findings.

## Why is this project important?

This project will address the critical issue of prostate cancer disparities in rural and remote communities, aiming to improve outcomes for men who face worse survival rates and less access to treatment compared to those in urban areas. By uncovering the key factors behind these inequities, the project will provide insights that healthcare services, policymakers, and organisations like the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Cancer Council Queensland can use to develop targeted and effective solutions. For this reason, the findings of this project have the potential to help reduce health inequalities, improve access to care, and ensure that men in rural areas receive the same quality of treatment as urban patients.