

Why is it important to develop a plan to address cancer control inequalities in New Zealand?

Reducing inequalities is one of the two dual goals of the NZ Cancer Control Strategy (Ministry of Health, 2003). The Cancer Control Action Plan 2005-2010 (Ministry of Health, 2005) outlines numerous actions with respect to reducing inequalities across the cancer control continuum to be undertaken at national, regional and district levels.

Planning for the reduction of cancer control inequalities has previously been undertaken in an ad hoc manner based on historical trends, with inadequate coordination of services or funding.

The need to better plan and to develop strategies to reduce inequalities in cancer control in NZ has been identified by the Cancer Control Council (CCC) in their report, *'Mapping Progress'*. The 2007 report notes that some progress has been made in the area of inequalities, however, it also acknowledges that, on a regional and national level, there is still much work to be done.

In particular, the report has identified the need to reduce inequalities experienced by both Maori and Pacific people in the area of cancer control, both being populations whose incidence of cancer disease is much higher than that for the rest of the nation.

The Government's health policy allows for the expansion of cancer control services to better address the inequalities affecting certain demographic groups within the NZ populace. Developing a plan to tackle these inequalities will enable cancer networks to identify and focus on priorities at a regional level.



How will the plan to address inequalities relate to the NZ Cancer Control Strategy Action Plan?

Reducing inequalities is 1 of the 2 primary purposes of the Cancer Control Strategy Action Plan. The aim to address cancer-related inequalities is threaded through the 6 goals. The goals with supporting objectives that contribute to reducing inequalities with respect to cancer are;

- ③ Reduce the incidence of cancer through primary prevention
- ③ Ensure the effective screening and early detection to reduce cancer incidence and mortality
- ③ Ensure effective diagnosis and treatment of cancer to reduce morbidity and mortality
- ③ Improve the quality of life for those with cancer, their family and whanau through support, rehabilitation and palliative care
- ③ Improve the delivery of services across the continuum of cancer, through effective planning, coordination and integration of resources and activity, monitoring and evaluation
- ③ Improve the effectiveness of cancer control in New Zealand through research and surveillance.

What will it achieve?

The objectives are to:

- ③ Reduce inequalities in regards to access to services across the cancer control continuum, with a particular focus on Maori and Pacific peoples, as well as addressing issues for those affected by geographical and socio-economic factors
- ③ Coordination and facilitation of inequalities stakeholder projects
- ③ Provision of leadership via strategic plan development that will maximise opportunities to address inequalities
- ③ Monitoring and potential evaluation of current and new initiatives aimed at reducing inequalities
- ③ Promote good practice

What principles will be adopted?

- ③ A systems approach will be used to address inequalities
- ③ The focus will be on 3 dimensions of access:
 - ~ How individuals get into the system
 - ~ Provider behaviour towards the individuals
 - ~ The manner in which the system itself is organised
- ③ Build on current knowledge and initiatives work occurring nationally, regionally and locally
- ③ Initial focus will be on;
 - ~ Initiatives which align with the relevant specific actions contained within the Cancer Control Strategy Action Plan 2005-2010
 - ~ Providing leadership, facilitation and coordination function for the region
- ③ The Network will provide guidance to cancer service funders and providers who, in turn, will continue to be responsible for prioritising service provision
- ③ The NZ regional cancer networks will work collaboratively on this project to share learnings, maximise efficiencies and to provide peer support / review
- ③ The network will identify and prioritise issues specific to the region

Who are the key stakeholders for this project?

- ③ Cancer Network representatives
- ③ District Health Boards
- ③ Primary Health Organisations
- ③ Iwi Providers
- ③ Pacific Providers
- ③ Non-Government Organisations
- ③ Other funders and providers of cancer services
- ③ Consumer representatives
- ③ Ministry of Health
- ③ Cancer Control Council
- ③ NZ Guidelines Group
- ③ Other NZ regional cancer control networks
- ③ Intersectorial agencies

What steps are involved?

The four regional cancer networks have collaborated to develop a project scope which identifies Phase 1 activities.

Phase 1 will be the establishment phase, encompassing;

- ③ Developing a partnership model with Maori/Pacific
 - ③ Agreement of an overarching approach
 - ③ Recruitment of a project manager ③
- Situational analysis
- ~ Eg. Where are the main areas of inequalities in the region?
 - ~ Eg. What activities are proposed or in place to address existing inequalities?
- ③ Identification of an initiative for immediate implementation
 - ③ Contribute to the development of the regional strategic plan which will be occurring in parallel to this project
 - ③ Development of a prioritised action plan to form the basis of Phase II

What are the timeframes?

Phase 1 is underway as of the mid 2008 and it is anticipated that Phase 2 components will be introduced from 2009.

Who to contact for further information?

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