

# Multi-disciplinary meetings

Understanding how your care is planned

## *What is a multi-disciplinary meeting?*

A multi-disciplinary meeting (MDM) is where a team of health professionals meet to diagnose your cancer and plan your treatment. A multi-disciplinary approach is best practice in cancer care. The team considers:

- all the treatment options available
- your personal situation and preferences
- what support you might need during treatment

## *Will my treatment be discussed at a multi-disciplinary meeting?*

Cancer multi-disciplinary meetings in Gippsland are hosted by Latrobe Regional Hospital, with attendees from all Gippsland hospitals. The specialist you have been referred to will ask for your consent to discuss your care at a meeting. If you agree:

- a referral will be sent to the meeting coordinator
- your scans and test results will be collected
- your results will be discussed at the next meeting
- the team will make recommendations for your treatment
- your specialist will discuss the recommendations and your choices at your next appointment
- a copy of the recommendations will be sent your GP

Your diagnosis and treatment may be discussed at a second meeting if your situation changes (i.e. if your cancer progresses). You do not need to pay for your care to be discussed (Medicare covers the cost). You can request your care is discussed at a multidisciplinary meeting if your doctor hasn't mentioned it to you.

## *Who attends the multi-disciplinary meetings?*

Multi-disciplinary meetings may include:

- **Surgeons:** your surgeon and others
- **Medical oncologists:** who treat cancer using special medicines (chemotherapy)
- **Radiation oncologists:** who treat cancer using radiation
- **Radiation therapists:** who give the radiation
- **Other specialist doctors:** e.g. respiratory physician; palliative care doctors
- **Nurse specialists:** e.g. cancer care nurse
- **Pathologists:** who can interpret the changes caused by the disease in blood and biopsy samples
- **Radiologists:** who can read and understand medical images e.g. X-rays, CT scans, MRIs
- **Allied health staff:** e.g. social workers, dietitians, physiotherapists

You are not required to attend the meeting. Many other patients care will also be discussed at the meeting so it is not possible for you to attend.

## *What if I have questions about the recommendations?*

If you have any questions about your care, you should discuss these with your specialist or with your GP. If your GP is unable to answer them they may contact the hospital team on your behalf. You may also be able to discuss your care options with a cancer care nurse.