



## Cancer Australia National Consumer Group Consensus Values Statement

*The following is an aspirational set of values that reflect what consumers of cancer services and other people affected by cancer see as important with regard to treatment, support and involvement in cancer control. These values have been developed by Cancer Australia's National Consumer Advisory Group (NCAG). The values reflected in this document are significant at all levels of policy making, health service delivery and research. Consideration of these values by those involved in cancer care will help reduce the burden of cancer on the Australian community.*

The NCAG fully supports the mission statement of the *Charter of Paris Against Cancer (2000)* and especially notes Articles VII and VIII which:

- (a) advocate the rights of people affected by cancer to be comprehensively informed and to be engaged in all phases of cancer treatment, research and policy making, and
- (b) stress the fundamental importance of the patient's quality of life regardless of the stage of the disease and its prognosis.

In particular, we urge that all people affected by cancer:

1. are respected, with key human rights such as freedom of treatment choice and acceptance of the cultural, sexual and religious background, socio-economic status, home circumstances and geographical location of people affected by cancer;
2. have the right to be fully informed and supported throughout their cancer experience;
3. are fully involved in the decision making around treatment and support, and have access to a multidisciplinary treatment and support plan that incorporates the cultural, emotional, social, physical, psychological, spiritual and sexual needs of people affected by cancer;
4. are given timely, appropriate information in the form most suited (oral, in writing, tape recording) about treatment options and choices, that facilitates joint decision making, this should be communicated in a respectful, caring, compassionate and reflective way;
5. are entitled to be offered in writing, detailed information (based on the best available evidence), about the type and staging of their cancer diagnosis;
6. where it is available and appropriate are given the opportunity to join cancer clinical trials;
7. are offered, emotional and social support services;
8. have access to quality and safe treatment and support that where possible, is delivered by a multidisciplinary treatment and support team; and
9. are viewed as important strategic partners by medical, research, industry, government and policy-making groups, in all aspects of decision-making across the cancer continuum of prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, survival and palliative care; and the direction of research.

## **Glossary of terms:**

### **Multi disciplinary care**

An integrated team approach to cancer care. This happens when medical (including the person's general practitioner, nursing and allied health professionals involved in patient's treatment together consider all treatment options and personal preferences of the patient and collaboratively develop an individual care plan that best meets the needs of that patient.

### **Staging of cancer**

Staging is about the spread of the disease as it affects treatment options and prognosis. Staging may be based on clinical or pathological features. Frequently it is based on the tumour characteristics and local or distant spread.

### **Clinical trials**

Research conducted with the patient's permission, which usually involves a comparison of two or more treatments or diagnostic methods. The aim is to gain better understanding of the underlying disease process and/or methods to treat it. A clinical trial is conducted with rigorous scientific method for determining the effectiveness of a proposed treatment and is something in which a person participates voluntarily.

### **Cancer Continuum**

The full spectrum of cancer control services from prevention and early detection efforts, through diagnosis and treatment to rehabilitation and support services for people living with cancer and/or palliative care.

### **Cancer Control**

All actions that reduce the burden of cancer in the community, it includes every aspect of care, from prevention and early detection to curative treatment and palliative care, all underpinned by the best scientific evidence available.

### **People affected by cancer**

People who have had a personal experience of cancer, including patients, people living with cancer, cancer survivors, caregivers and family members.

## **Reference:**

World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium Charter of Paris,  
4 February 2000.