

## 4 Appropriate for patients with metastatic breast cancer to be offered participation in suitable and relevant clinical trials from the time of diagnosis and throughout treatment.

### WHAT THIS PRACTICE IS ABOUT

This practice highlights the importance of giving people with metastatic breast cancer the opportunity to take part in suitable clinical trials.

Clinical trials are an important way of finding new and better ways to care for people with metastatic breast cancer. A clinical trial may involve a new treatment or a different combination of treatments that may be more effective than current treatments.

It is important that health professionals discuss suitable clinical trials with people who have metastatic breast cancer and talk about what the trials involve. Clinical trials should be considered at the time of diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer and during treatment.

### WHY THIS PRACTICE MIGHT BE IMPORTANT FOR YOU

Taking part in a clinical trial could give you access to a new treatment (or combination of treatments) that is not yet available as part of standard care. Your involvement in a clinical trial can also help improve the future care of other people with metastatic breast cancer.

Not all clinical trials are suitable for everyone. Your health professionals can let you know about trials that may be suitable for you.

Before deciding whether to take part in a clinical trial, it is important to understand what is involved. You may need to have additional tests or appointments and your care may be managed at a different hospital or clinic. There may also be more paperwork to complete. Your health professionals can tell you about any additional tests or paperwork that may be involved.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

*The first question to ask is: Is there a clinical trial that may be suitable for me?*

*There are lots of other questions you can ask to help you understand more about clinical trials. Visit the Australian Cancer Trials website for a list of questions to ask about clinical trials.*

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information about clinical trials for metastatic breast cancer, visit the [Australian Cancer Trials website](#).



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**Cancer Australia**

[canceraustralia.gov.au/statement](http://canceraustralia.gov.au/statement)

# Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer

Metastatic breast cancer is cancer that has spread from the breast to other parts of the body. It is also known as advanced breast cancer or secondary breast cancer. People with metastatic breast cancer experience a range of emotional, physical and practical challenges.

The aim of treatment and care for people with metastatic breast cancer is to control the growth and spread of the cancer, relieve symptoms and help people live as well as possible. There is evidence that approaches to treatment and care vary across Australia.

It is important that everyone with metastatic breast cancer receives evidence-based information, treatment and support that reflect their individual needs and preferences. This includes avoiding treatments that may not provide meaningful benefits or may cause harm.

## ABOUT THE STATEMENT

The aim of the *Cancer Australia Statement – Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer* is to reduce unwarranted variation in the treatment and care of people with metastatic breast cancer in Australia.

The Statement focuses on 10 practices that have been identified as appropriate or inappropriate in the treatment and care of people with metastatic breast cancer, to help them to live as well as possible. This includes providing the treatment and care that is most likely to benefit the patient, and avoiding treatments that are unlikely to help, or that may be harmful.

Not every practice is relevant for every person diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. The practice(s) relevant to an individual will depend on their diagnosis and situation.

## HOW WAS THE STATEMENT DEVELOPED?

The Statement is based on available national and international evidence and was developed with input from a range of experts and people affected by metastatic breast cancer. The Statement has the support of key clinical colleges, cancer and consumer organisations.

## USING THE STATEMENT

The Statement aims to empower people with metastatic breast cancer and their families to make informed decisions about treatment and care that are right for them. A key part of informed decision making is to talk to health professionals and ask questions about available options for treatment, care and support.

You may wish to talk to your health professionals about which practices in the Statement are most relevant for you. Each practice includes a few questions that you may find helpful to guide conversations about your treatment and care options.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the *Cancer Australia Statement – Influencing best practice in metastatic breast cancer* and to access supporting resources, visit **Cancer Australia** website.



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