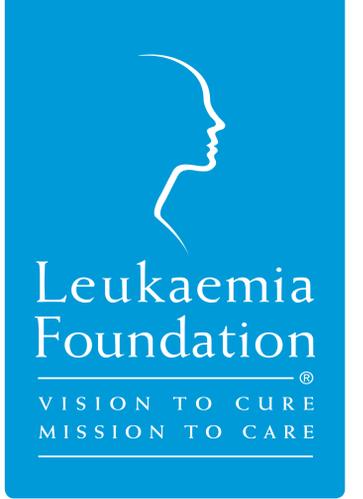




The *JumpStart* Blood Cancer Survivorship Program



Bridging the gap between dependence and renewed independence in everyday life.

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Introduction

Treatments for blood cancer are ever improving, as is the 5-year-survival rate for most of the main blood cancers in Australia. Survivors of blood cancer face many challenges to re-engage in their everyday meaningful lives. These challenges can be very difficult to overcome on their own and without adequate and appropriate support from health professionals and survivorship experts. The side effects of complex fatigue, lack of energy and decreased cardio-vascular fitness, all of which hamper efforts of survivors to re-engage in their meaningful everyday lives, require a multidisciplinary approach to achieve positive outcomes for blood cancer survivors.

How can we get people from point A to point B?



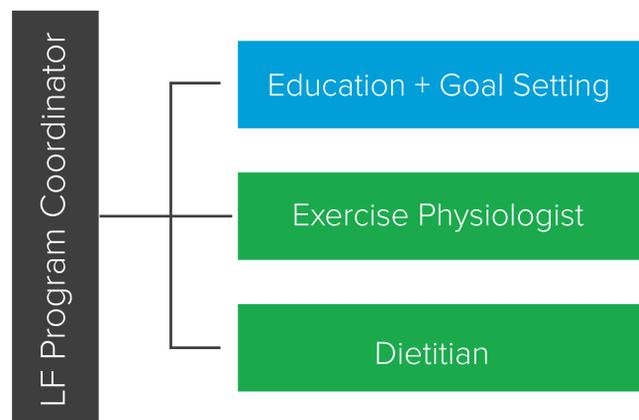
The Leukaemia Foundation JumpStart pilot program used the existing role of Leukaemia Foundation's Support Coordinators to link participants in both Victoria and Tasmania with health professionals in their local areas. These experts were exercise physiologists and dietitians.

Participants were also linked back in with the General Practitioner to acquire a Medicare funded enhanced primary care plan giving them 6 visits to these specialists. During this program the Leukaemia Foundation's Support Coordinator acted as the conduit between the highly skilled Acute Health Care Professionals and the Private and Primary Health Professionals.

Aim/Background

Research shows that there is a measureable effect on cardio-vascular fitness for our blood cancer patients and in some cases this can be enormously significant and debilitating. We also know that this damage can be reversed and that the way to improve cardio-vascular fitness and reduce cancer related fatigue is through moderate intensity physical activity.

"Since cancer survivors are a heterogeneous group, their exercise prescription should be individualised and tailored based on health status, disease trajectory, previous and/or current treatment, current fitness level and past and present exercise participation and preferences in order to be safe and effective." - Schmitz KH, Courneya KS, Matthews C, et al (2010)



Methods

Participants in Victoria and Tasmania (n=18) responded to expressions of interest advertised by the Leukaemia Foundation. Parameters included 18+ years of age, disease remission, and written medical clearance from a General Practitioner. Those having active treatment or with unstable disease were excluded from this pilot study.

Participants had an initial screening assessment with the Program Manager to outline the program requirements. Participants then arranged medical clearance to participate and also obtained an Enhanced Primary Care Plan (EPC plan) through their local General Practitioner.

The participants outlined their everyday goals using the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM). The COPM is an individualized, validated, client-centred measure designed for use by occupational therapists to detect change in a client's self-perception of performance in their lives over time. It is designed to be used as an outcome measure. The COPM is designed for use with clients with a variety of disabilities and across all developmental stages. The goals outlined in the COPM informed the physical activity, health education and nutrition component of the individual programs.

Education

- Treatment effects on cardiovascular system
- Cancer related fatigue
- Managing Energy
- Sleep hygiene
- Fear of cancer recurrence
- Returning to work advice
- Goal setting
- Graded return to activity

Expert Assessment & Intervention

- -Exercise physiologist (VO2 Max, HR Max, DEXA-Scan, BP, body fat %)
- APD Accredited Practising Dietician (Ward diet vs survivor diet)
- LF Support Services Coordinator existing role

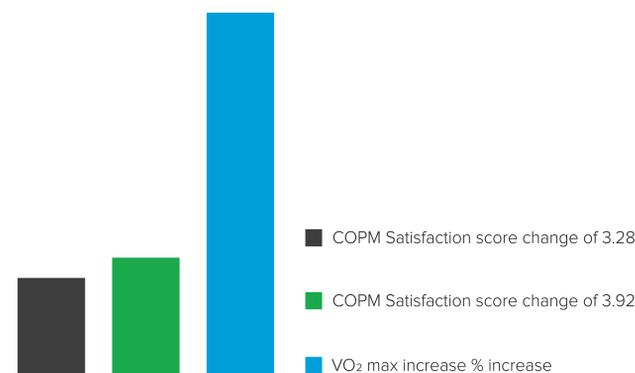
Coordination

- Self-health management
- Link between the complexity of the acute health care system and private health professionals
- Multiple touch points across the four months
- Continued problem solving and motivation

Results

Results included clinically significant increases in COPM Performance scores of 3.28 and COPM Satisfaction scores of 3.92. Other physiological testing included an average increase of 12% in VO2 max and nil significant changes in anthropometry.

Pre-Post Score Changes for Performance Score, Satisfaction Score and VO2Max increase



Conclusion

Our quantitative and qualitative data supports our hypothesis of overcoming complex blood cancer fatigue and improving occupational performance self-perception by using targeted health education, specialised health professional intervention and individualised goal setting using self-health management principles.

A key finding of this pilot was the ability to use existing Leukaemia Foundation resources combined with existing Medicare Schemes and local health professionals to give blood cancer survivors the tools to re-engage in their everyday lives and better self-health management.



"I'm excited today because it's the first day in four years that I have felt well enough for a hit of golf. I am sharing a cart with a mate to be sure I make it! Thanks for prodding me into action. Thinking back to the time when I was captive in 7E at The Alfred I never thought this day would come..."
- 'John', Jumpstart participant, swimming at his local pool with his grandson