

# Sexual health: the missing piece in cancer care

**Mary Hayes**  
University of Sydney



# Disclosures

Funded by the Cancer Patient Support Program (CPSP)



# The current landscape

50-89% of patients with cancers in the pelvic region experience ongoing sexual problems at least 2-years post treatment completion

40-100% of individuals with all cancers report concerns in this area

Knock-on effect on:

- Overall health outcomes
- Quality of life
- Relationships

Sexual health in cancer care is **not routinely addressed**


Langy et al, 2009; Bober et al, 2012; Mishra et al, 2021


# Why?

- Time
- Space
- Knowledge
- Communications skills
- Confidence
- Workplace culture



# It's not all bad...

 **Everyone experiences perimenopause and menopause differently.**



**National Menopause and Perimenopause Awareness Campaign**



**ST VINCENT'S  
NELUNE  
MEN'S HEALTH CENTRE**



 **OVARIAN CANCER AUSTRALIA**

**Webinar**  
**Love in the time of cancer**

Self-esteem, intimacy, sexuality after an ovarian cancer diagnosis



**2026 MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA**

**Fundamentals of Sexual Health After Cancer Diagnosis: An Interactive Course**

**ONLINE WEBINAR**

**ONLINE WEBINAR**



**Reclaiming Intimacy after Cancer: Sexual Wellbeing for Women and Men**

This webinar explores how cancer and its treatments can impact personal confidence, connection, and quality of life. The session will share practical strategies to help individuals rebuild trust in their bodies, strengthen relationships, and enhance overall wellbeing.



Natasha Keir  
Nurse Practitioner



James Georgiou  
Sexual Health & Urology  
Pharmacist & Sexologist  
Men's Health Solutions

Tuesday 17 February  
7:00 - 8:00pm AEDT

In collaboration with  

# Sexual health is everybody's business

Yet, nurses **are uniquely positioned** to initiate and engage in conversations about intimacy and sexual function with people with cancer.



**Visible & present** across the cancer trajectory

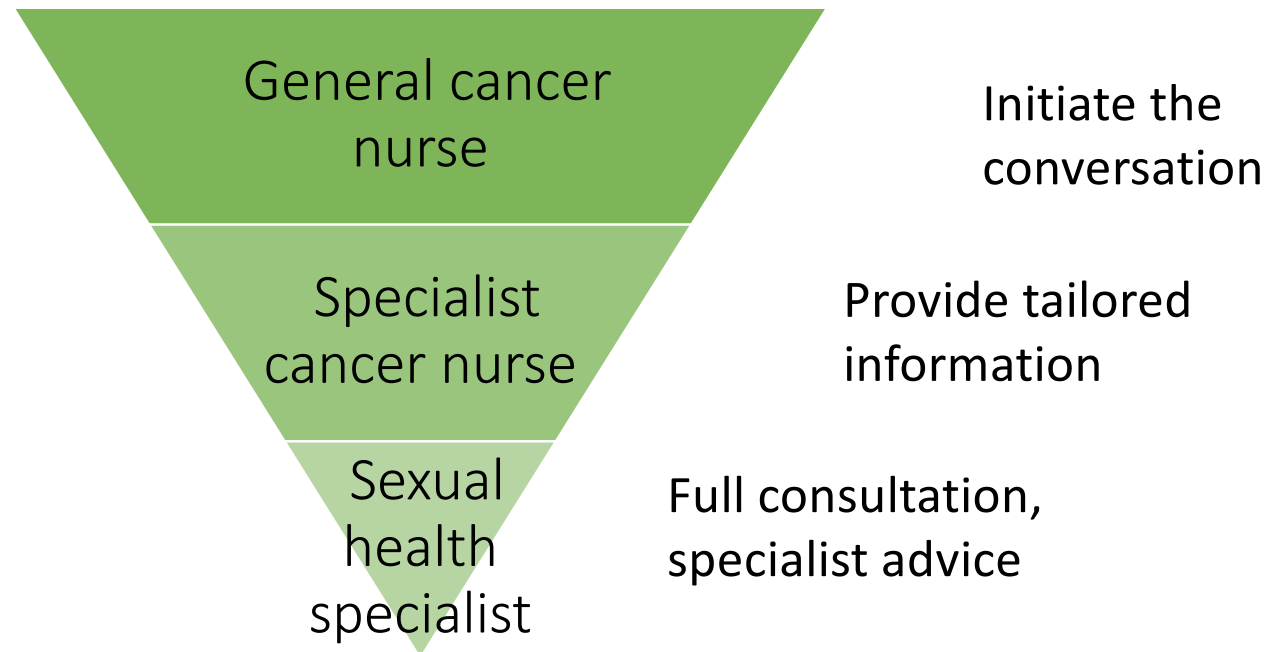


**Continuity of care** between treatments and follow up



Over time, **rapport** established with individuals and their partners

# The role of the cancer nurse





Online education course designed to increase the **comfort, confidence, knowledge and skill** of the cancer workforce to identify and address issues related to sexual function and intimacy.



**Co-designed**



**Interactive**



**Accessible**

AYAs



People with  
disability

Older  
adults

LGBTQIA+

People from culturally and linguistically  
diverse backgrounds

"By showing vulnerability, you are creating safety. Lean into your discomfort."  
- **Janel, Disability Subject Matter Expert**

Navigation Top

# Module 1 Sexual function, pleasure, and intimacy

STOP

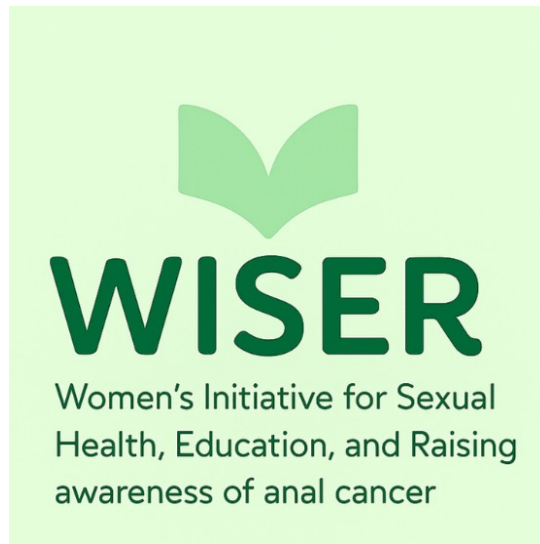


SEXFIDC

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# SexFICC launching in July





To **address** the unmet sexual health information needs of women with anal cancer

- Patient information resource
- Implementation toolkit

Tailored to HCPs working in radiation oncology but all nurses welcome to participate in implementation training.

**WISER builds on** the information and knowledge presented in SexFICC.

# The critical role of nurses

- In 2024, there were 8,234 cancer nurses employed in Australia (Australian Government Health Workforce Data Report, 2024)
- 85% of cancer nurses identify themselves as experienced, and over 50% have post-graduate qualifications (Bradford et al, 2023)
- Nurses ask the critical research questions

We are slowly seeing some developments in funding for nursing research  
but **more needs to be done.**

# Key takeaways



Sexual function and intimacy concerns related to cancer and cancer treatment **is everybody's business**



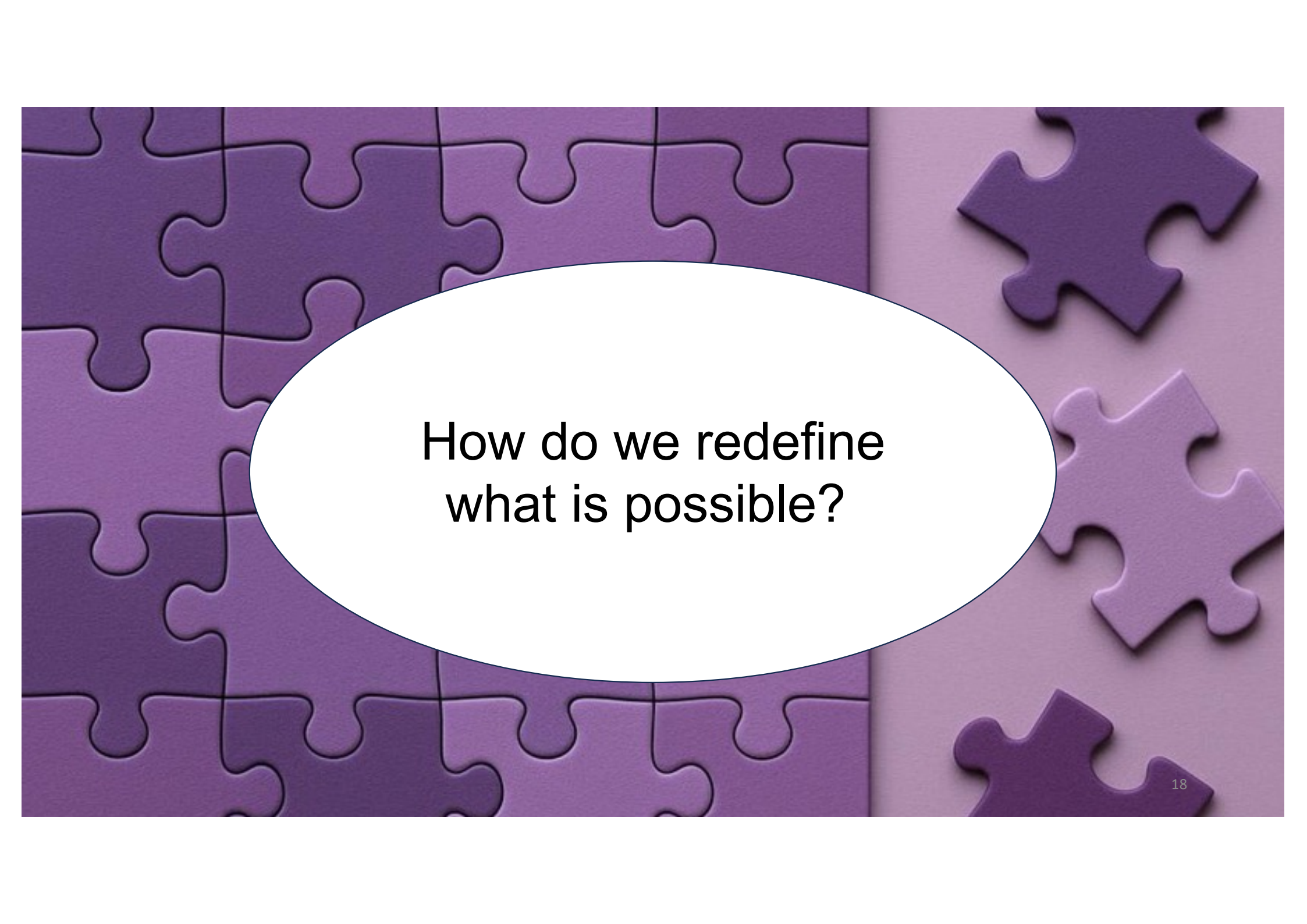
**Nurses are well positioned to lead** discussions and improvements in addressing sexual health concerns



**Confidence** grows with experience



Actively **mentor** junior colleagues

The background of the slide is a purple color with a pattern of interlocking puzzle pieces. A white oval is centered on the slide, containing the text. The puzzle pieces are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with some pieces missing or floating on the right side.

How do we redefine  
what is possible?

# Acknowledgements

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People with lived experience of cancer

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