

Introduction

At Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, lung cancer patients can access keyhole, open and robotic thoracic surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy and clinical trials. Lifehouse delivers the best mesothelioma, thoracic and lung cancer treatments. Our lung specialists work in dedicated team of surgeons, chemotherapy specialists, radiation therapy specialists, lung cancer nurse specialists, and allied health workers focused on people with diagnosed or suspected lung cancer.

Statistics which lead to the change:

9% of all new cancer diagnoses are lung cancer.
17% of all cancer deaths are lung cancer.
22% chance of survival at five years post-lung cancer diagnosis.

The lung cancer patient's outcome is directly related to continuous involvement of their health care providers.

Lung cancer model-of-care varies in Australia depending on infrastructure and resources.

Lung Cancer Nursing- a new model-of-care preparing for better outcomes

Lung cancer models-of-care vary among different institutions within Australia, depending on the infrastructure, available resources, quality standards and operating procedures. The model of care depending on whether the care involvement is continuous throughout the patient journey or whether it is fragmented or "on demand".

- Chris O'Brien Lifehouse started with one full time lung nurse specialist
- The lung nurse specialist was supporting lung medical oncology patients at the out patient clinic for smooth process of their ongoing care such as appointment, scans and blood test results, follow up.
- As the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse started expanding, caring for advanced lung cancer patients – the lung specialist nurses positions changed to 2 full time nursing staff and continued to follow up on all new patients who were seen by medical oncologist at the out patient clinics.

National lung cancer screening will be soon implemented by Australian Government early 2025

At Chris O'Brien Life House we pre emptily implemented a new model of care in preparation towards the lung cancer screening. This new model of care provides comprehensive support for both medical oncology and surgical lung cancer patients.

Supporting them through their cancer journey

- Regular education to patients on treatment, management and outcomes
- Liaise with day therapy staff and advise and review all patients who have started their treatment
- Liaise with patient's primary health care providers
- Link the patient with local palliative care team for ongoing symptom management

Medical Oncology Lung Cancer Specialist Nurse

- Supporting the outpatient clinics
- First line of contact for all medical oncology outpatients
- Ongoing support for all lung cancer
- Follow up on investigations

Lung Cancer Nurse Practitioner

- Triage Lung cancer patients
- Rapid access
- Smoking cessation clinic
- Nurse led ward rounds
- Continuing with ongoing quality improvement projects and lung cancer research activities

Surgical Lung Cancer Specialist Nurse

- Supporting Surgical lung cancer as inpatients care
- Liaise with thoracic surgeons and case manager
- Provides nurse led ward rounds
- Supports patients chest drainage and care
- Education on chest drains and support for ICU & ward staff

Early detection a challenge for health care setups

Early detection for lung cancer will enable us to capture the early stages of lung cancer & offer treatment including surgical intervention earlier than ever before. This future increased number of surgical lung cancer patients might utilise the health care set up once the screening is implemented Nation wide. This new model of care will enable Health care setups look into their model of care to uptake this influx of patients. The lung cancer NP also provides support by doing spirometry & lung function tests, a prerequisite before their surgery. Many times, spirometry appointments takes weeks to book and delay in surgery. With this new model of care, our patient can get the spirometry & lung function tests completed at their outpatient clinic appointment which decreases their waiting time to surgery.

Introduction of smoking cessation support

As smoking is one of the major risk factors for lung cancer, the lung NP has established smoking cessation clinic. It provides support to all lung cancer patients who are currently nicotine dependant and unable to quit. The lung cancer NP who provides all the three domains of smoking cessation which are

- Counselling
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- Pharmacotherapy support

References:

National Lung Screening Program, Lung Foundation Australia, 2022.

Lung cancer screening: the hidden public health emergency

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Tanner NT, Kanodra NM, Gebregziabher M, Payne E, Halbert CH, Warren GW, et al. The association between smoking abstinence and mortality in the National Lung Screening Trial. Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2016;193(5):534–41.

Conclusion and Feedback

Our new implemented model of care since May 2023 has had positive feedback from both nurses and patients. It provided the link between the surgical and medical oncology lung cancer patients, increases revenue with supporting clinics.