

## The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey on the use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia.

The aim of this survey is to understand the practices, attitudes and beliefs of Australian medical oncologists when it comes to discussing and prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs.

All your responses will be anonymous and are non-identifiable.

The survey should take less than 15 minutes of your time.

# The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

## 1. Are you a?

- Consultant
- Advanced trainee

## 2. How many years have you worked in medical oncology (including advanced training)?

## 3. In which state or territory do you predominantly practice?

- QLD
- NSW
- ACT
- VIC
- TAS
- SA
- WA
- NT

## 4. What is your age?

## 5. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

## 6. How many hours per week on average do you spend in clinics?

## 7. Is most of your clinical practice in?

- Public practice
- Private practice
- An equal mix of public and private practice
- N/A (I currently don't have a clinical practice)

## 8. Is most of your clinical practice located in?

- A metropolitan area
- A regional/rural area
- An equal mix of metropolitan and regional/rural areas
- N/A (I currently don't have a clinical practice)

## 9. How many hours per week on average do you spend in research?

**10. Approximately how many NEW patients do you see per year?**

**11. Approximately how many patients do you enrol into clinical trials per year?**

## 12. What types of cancer do you treat regularly?

[Regularly means you see more than one patient with this cancer per week in your clinic]

**Please tick all that apply.**

- Breast
- Colorectal
- Genitourinary
- Lung and other thoracic
- Gynaecological
- Upper gastrointestinal and hepatobiliary
- Central nervous system
- Head and neck
- Melanoma
- Haematological (incl. Lymphoma)
- Sarcoma
- Neuroendocrine tumours
- Other (please specify)

# The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

The next part of the survey will ask you about discussing and prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs.

For the purposes of this survey we would like you to think of **UNFUNDED ANTICANCER DRUGS** as any prescription anticancer drugs that are:

\*Not PBS subsidized, AND

\*Not used as part of a clinical trial or free access program, AND

\*The patient may need to pay substantially more than the standard dispensing fee

When the survey asks you to recall **DISCUSSIONS** you've had about unfunded anticancer drugs we would like you to include:

\*All occasions, regardless of whether you were advising that the drug should be used or not.

\*Those that are initiated by a patient or support person, as well as those initiated by yourself.

Discussing the same drug and indication with the same patient on more than one occasion should only count as one discussion.

**13. Have you had a discussion about an unfunded anticancer drug with a patient in the past 3 months?**

- Yes
- No

## The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

**14. With how many patients have you discussed an unfunded anticancer drug in the past 3 months?**

**15. With how many of these patients have you discussed more than 1 unfunded anticancer drug?**

**16. Of the discussions you've had with patients about unfunded anticancer drugs in the past 3 months, how many were initiated by the patient or their support person (e.g. relative, friend, etc), rather than by yourself (or your registrar/consultant)?**

[NOTE: If you answered 0 to Q14 above then you should answer 0 again here]

**17. Of the discussions you've had with patients about unfunded anticancer drugs in the past 3 months, how many were you suggesting to the patient that they should not have treatment with the unfunded anticancer drug?**

[NOTE: If you answered 0 to Q14 above then you should answer 0 again here]

## The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

**18. Of the [Q14] patients you have discussed unfunded anticancer drugs with in the past 3 months, to how many did you go on to prescribe an unfunded anticancer drug?**

**19. Was your answer to the previous question '0'?**

- Yes
- No

**20. Have you ever discussed an unfunded anticancer drug with a patient?**

- Yes
- No

## 21. Have you ever prescribed an unfunded anticancer drug?

- Yes
- No

## 22. If you have discussed but never prescribed an unfunded anticancer drug what is the main reason?

- I have never had a patient who is willing to have treatment with an unfunded anticancer drug
- The only time(s) I have discussed an unfunded anticancer drug I was informing the patient(s) about their availability but recommending a different treatment or care pathway
- I like to inform my patients about their availability but I don't prescribe them because I don't think patients should have to pay for treatment
- My centre has a policy that does not allow me to prescribe unfunded anticancer drugs
- For advanced trainees: I have discussed an unfunded anticancer drug but my consultant has always preferred to use a different treatment
- Other (please specify)

**23. Thinking about how the costs of unfunded anticancer drugs are met, for the [Q18] patients you prescribed an unfunded cancer drug to in the past 3 months, how many times did:**

The patient meet the full cost (i.e. private prescription)?	<input type="text"/>
The pharmaceutical company contribute to part of the cost (e.g. access program)?	<input type="text"/>
The hospital/cancer centre contribute to part of the cost?	<input type="text"/>
The patient's private health insurer contribute to part of the cost?	<input type="text"/>
A charitable organisation contribute to part of the cost?	<input type="text"/>

**NOTE:** More than one option may apply to each patient, so your answer may add to more than **[Q18]** - which was your answer to Q18. If you answered 0 for Q18 then you should place a 0 in each box for this question

# The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

**24. Please consider up to 3 occasions that you have prescribed an unfunded anticancer drug in the past 3 months.**

**If there are more than 3 occasions consider the most recent 3.**

**For each occasion please list:**

- The drug name**
- The indication**
- The approximate total out-of-pocket cost the patient has paid or will be expected to pay**

<b>Drug</b>	<input type="text"/>
Indication	<input type="text"/>
Total out-of-pocket cost	<input type="text"/>
<b>Drug</b>	<input type="text"/>
Indication	<input type="text"/>
Total out-of-pocket cost	<input type="text"/>
<b>Drug</b>	<input type="text"/>
Indication	<input type="text"/>
Total out-of-pocket cost	<input type="text"/>

**25. How does the number of patients you have prescribed unfunded anticancer drugs to in the past 3 months compare to a similar period 5 years ago? Is it?**

- Much more
- Quite a bit more
- A little bit more
- About the same
- A little bit less
- Quite a bit less
- Much less
- N/A (I have been in practice <5 years)

**26. Do you find yourself discussing with or prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs more to?**

- Patients considering curative/definitive/adjuvant treatment

OR

- Patients considering non-curative/palliative treatment

**27. Do you find yourself discussing with or prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs more to?**

- Patients considering first line treatment for advanced disease

OR

- Patients considering last line treatment for advanced disease

**28. Do you find yourself discussing with or prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs more to?**

- Patients younger than 70 years of age

OR

- Patients older than 70 years of age

**29. Do you find yourself discussing with or prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs more to?**

- Patients you see in private practice clinics

OR

- Patients you see in public hospital clinics

OR

- N/A (I only do private or public clinics, not both)

**30. Compared to your colleagues who treat similar cancers, how likely do you think you are to discuss an unfunded anticancer drug?**

- Much more
- Quite a bit more
- A little bit more
- The same
- A little bit less
- Quite a bit less
- Much less

**31. Compared to your colleagues who treat similar cancers, how likely do you think you are to prescribe an unfunded anticancer drug?**

- Much more
- Quite a bit more
- A little bit more
- The same
- A little bit less
- Quite a bit less
- Much less

## 32. In 10 years time, do you think you will be prescribing unfunded anticancer drugs?

- Much more
- Quite a bit more
- A little bit more
- The same amount
- A little bit less
- Quite a bit less
- Much less

**33. How much does the amount of out-of-pocket cost to your patient influence your willingness to prescribe an unfunded anticancer drug?**

- A lot
- Somewhat
- A little bit
- Not at all

**34. For the following statement please choose the option that best applies to you.**

***"There are NO situations when I believe it is appropriate for patients to be paying for anticancer drugs."***

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

# The use of unfunded anticancer drugs by medical oncologists in Australia

## 35. Please rate the importance of the following list of potential concerns and barriers that may affect whether you discuss or prescribe unfunded anticancer drugs

	Very important	Moderately important	Not that important	Not important at all
It takes too much time to discuss unfunded anticancer drugs with a patient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It takes too much work to obtain partial funding and/or organise treatment with unfunded anticancer drugs (e.g. paperwork, emails, phone calls)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is often an excessive delay between recommending and starting treatment with an unfunded anticancer drug	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The potential financial hardship to the patient and/or their family concerns me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would have to refer my patient to another centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is hard for me find out how much an unfunded anticancer drug will cost a patient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The ethics of pharmaceutical company shared access programs concerns me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking patients to make decisions about unfunded anticancer drugs is not fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult for patients to evaluate the benefits versus the costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am concerned about distressing patients by discussing unfunded anticancer drugs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am concerned about not being able to offer the same treatment to all my patients in my practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## **36. How comfortable are you discussing the out-of-pocket costs of unfunded anticancer drugs with your patients?**

- Very comfortable
- Quite comfortable
- Neither comfortable or uncomfortable
- Quite uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable

## 37. How helpful would each of the following be in discussions with patients regarding unfunded anticancer drugs?

	Extremely useful	Moderately useful	A bit useful	Not at all useful
A website with a list of drug prices for private prescriptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A website with a list of access programs available for unfunded anticancer drugs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Including the price of an unfunded anticancer drug in the product information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Results of a cost-effectiveness analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A clear understanding of what drug costs private health funds will cover	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Written guidelines about how oncologists should communicate out-of-pocket costs with patients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication workshops focusing on discussions with patients about out-of-pocket costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**38. You have reached the END of the survey.**

**Thank you for your participation.**

**If you would like to make any comments about this survey or the issue of unfunded anticancer drugs please do so in the box provided below.**